

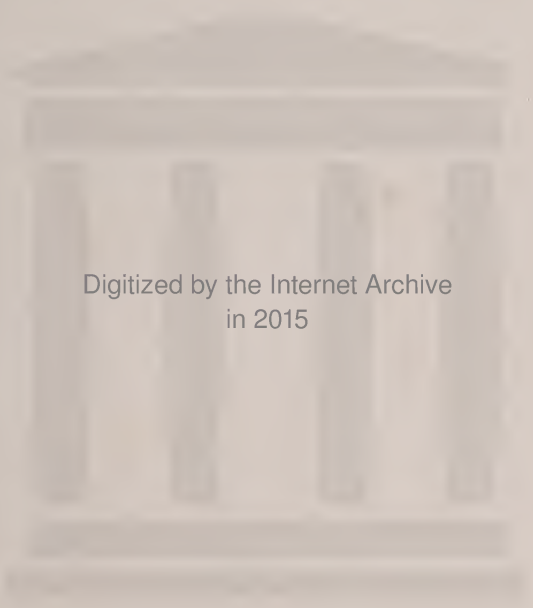


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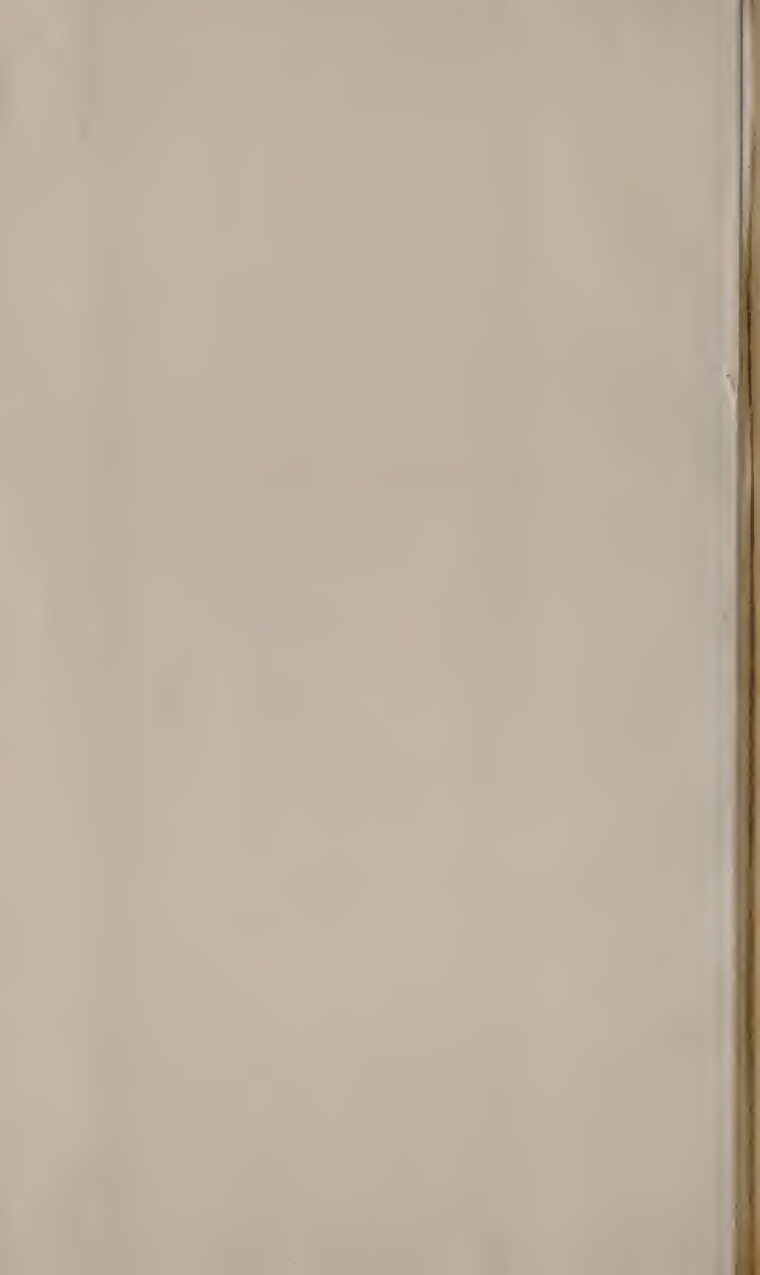
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BAXTERIANA:

CONTAINING

A SELECTION

FROM THE

WORKS OF BAXTER.

COLLECTED BY

ARTHUR YOUNG, ESQ. F.R.S.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE person who offers to the Public such a work as I have now prepared, upon a subject which has not formed the principal business of his life, nor even commanded during the greatest portion of it his particular attention, may be expected to explain the motives which have induced him to step out of the usual line of his pursuit. In answer to any enquiry of this tendency, the collector of these sheets is ready to give what he hopes will be thought a candid reply. Eighteen years ago he suffered a severe domestic calamity, which, for the first time in his life, led his mind into a train of thought very different from all that had formed, till then, his pursuits, pleasure, or occupation. For the first time, he began seriously to think of that which a Christian ought to think of every day of his existence—a future state. When the chains which tie us to this world begin to break, it is time to reconsider the principles of the religion we have professed: the heart demands consolation, and nominal christianity has it not to give: for any solid comfort, we must drink deeper. I read much, and sometimes conversed on the subject, enough to hear it urged, that a man who had been publishing books all his life, should make an open profession of his faith, by adding one to the

number: in truth, I should have done this long ago, but found the admirable productions already before the public so numerous, that it appeared presumption to publish any work confessedly inferior to those I was in the habit of perusing. For my own improvement, I began very early in reading, to extract passages the most impressive; but in a course of years these became so extended, that the idea of printing, gave way to the conviction that such a work would be too expensive, and voluminous to be read. The works of Baxter had furnished so many of these passages, that I thought a selection of them might be useful to many readers, who had neither the time nor the opportunity to consult the originals; especially as some of these could not be procured but with difficulty: accordingly, all copied from that truly pious and excellent divine, were selected: nor was it without some surprise that I found them sufficient to form a moderate volume. If they should prove as useful to others, as I hope and trust they have been to me, the reader will forgive the present intrusion.

I will not lay down the pen without most earnestly intreating those who are but entering on life, to be persuaded to pay a constant attention to the duties of religion, especially the four great means of grace, prayer, public worship, reading the scriptures of truth, and, as much as circumstances will permit, meditating on their contents. I can with truth assure such, that when I reflect on the various errors and miscarriages of my life, previous to my mind taking a serious turn, I

am clearly convinced that I should have avoided many, had I listened with more submission to the persuasion of a most valuable and pious mother, whom I did not learn sufficiently to esteem till many years after I had lost her; and I speak this in allusion both to temporal and eternal objects. In truth, there is but one principle that ought to govern mankind; to think, speak, and act in such a manner as will please God, and to avoid all that will offend him: not the *supreme being*, the *great first cause* of modern philosophers, but the God of Revelation. O my young friends, let me with truth assure you, that though I have experienced some highly flattering, and partook of many brilliant scenes, yet would I not exchange the consolation and hope which Christianity gives me while blind, and quickly descending to the grave, for the most pleasing moments of my former life, with rejuvenescence to enjoy them.

The tranquillity of a mind gradually reposing in the clearest hope of a better world, is an enjoyment that cannot be purchased at too dear a rate. It is not easy, sufficiently to value the peaceful close of a busy life, provided that repose is founded on the bright views of christian hope looking beyond the grave: the mist of doubts and perplexities dissipated in the meridian splendour of gospel truth; the storms of life softening into silence; the delirium of pleasure, and the dreams of dissipation fled, and the freed mind resigned to the dictates of reason; the wounds of conscience cured by the balm of eternal love; the heart, lacerated by the loss of those once so dear to us, in full expectation of a re-union

never more to be broken; every angry passion hushed into peace; the evils of life sunk in resignation to the divine will; the fervent desires of the renovated heart approaching the verge of never-ending enjoyment; and the whole soul reposing on the bosom of a Saviour's love. These ought to be the privileges of a real Christian, and will be so in proportion to the steadiness of his faith. May the perusal of the excellent Baxter, contribute to increase and strengthen such faith, and excite such hope in the mind of every reader.

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BAXTERIANA.

BOOK I.

MORAL STATE OF MAN.—HUMAN DEPRAVITY.—
ORIGINAL SIN.—ACTUAL SIN.

CHAP. I.—*Original Sin, universality of.*

ALL men are born with a serpentine malice and enmity against the seed of Christ, which is rooted in their very natures. Custom in sin increaseth this to more malignity; and it is only renewing grace that doth overcome it.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 803.

CHAP. II.—*Nature of Sin.*

He that is in a state of sin, hath habitually and predominantly a greater love for some pleasures, or profits, or honours of this world, than he hath to God, and to the glory which he hath promised : he preferreth, and seeketh, and beholdeth (if he can) his fleshly prosperity in this world, before the

favour of God and the happiness of the world to come. His heart is turned from God unto the creature, and is principally set on things on earth. Thus his sin is the blindness, and madness, and perfidiousness, and idolatry of his soul, and is forsaking of God, and his salvation, for a thing of nought. It is that to his soul, which poison, and death, and sickness, and lameness, and blindness, are to his body.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 7.

Sin is (formally) the violation of the perfect, holy, righteous law of God.

It is a denial or contempt of the authority or governing power of God; as if we said, thou shalt not be our governor in this.

It is an usurping the sovereign power to ourselves of governing ourselves, in that act; for when we refuse God's government, we set up ourselves in his stead; and so make gods of ourselves as to ourselves; as if we were self-sufficient, independent, and had right hereto.

It is a denying or contempt of the wisdom of God, as if he had unwisely made us a law, which is unmeet to rule us.

It is a setting up of our folly in the place of God's wisdom, and preferring it before him; as if we were wiser to know how to govern ourselves, and to know what is fittest and best for us now to do, than God is.

It is a contempt of the goodness of God, as he is the maker of the law; as if he had not done that which is best, but that which may be corrected or contradicted; and there were some evil in it to be avoided.

It is violation of God's propriety or dominion, robbing him of the use and service of that which is absolutely and totally his own.

It is a claiming of propriety in ourselves, as if we were our own, and might do with ourselves as we list.

It is a contempt of the gracious promises of God, by which he allured and bound us to obedience.

It is a contempt of the dreadful threatenings of God, by which he would have restrained us from evil.

It is a contempt or denial of the dreadful day of judgment, in which an account must be given of that sin.—Vol. i. p. 7.



CHAP. III.—*Malignity of Sin.*

LOOK always on sin as one that is ready to die, and consider how all men judge of it at the last. What do men in heaven say of it? And what do men in hell say of it? And what do men at death say of it? And what do converted souls, or awakened consciences say of it? Is it *then* followed with delight, and fearlessness, as it is now? Is it *then* applauded? Will any of them speak well of it? Nay, all the world speaks evil of sin in the general now, even when they love and commit the several acts. Will you sin when you are dying?

See that malignity in every one of your particular sins, which you can see and say, is sin in general.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 81, 82.

Esteem thy want of love to God (with the turning of it into the creature) to be the heart of the old man; thy most comprehensive odious sin; and observe this as the life of all thy particular sins, and hate it above all the rest. This is the very death, and greatest deformity of the soul; the absence of

God's image, and Spirit, and objectively of himself. I never loathe my heart so much, as when I observe how little it loveth the Lord. Methinks all the sins that ever I committed, are not so loathsome to me as this want of love to God. And it is this that is the venom, and malignity of every particular sin. *I never so much hate myself, as when I observe how little of God is within me,* and how far my heart is estranged from him. I never do so fully approve of the justice of God, if he should condemn me, and thrust me for ever from his presence, as when I observe how far I have thrust him from my heart. If there were any sin which proceedeth not from a want of love of God, I could easilier pardon it to myself, as knowing that God would easilier pardon. But not to love the God of Love, the fountain of love, the felicity of souls, is a sin unfit to be pardoned to any till it be repented of, and partly cured: Christ will forgive it to none that keep it. And when it is incurable, it is the special sin of hell; the badge of devils and damned souls. If God will not give me a heart to love him, I would I had never had a heart. If he will give me this, he giveth me all. Happy are the poor, the despised, and the persecuted, that can but live in the love of God. Oh miserable emperors, kings, and lords, that are strangers to this heavenly love, and love their lust above their Maker! Might I but live in the fervent love of God, what matter is it in what country, or what cottage, or what prison I live? If I live not in the love of God, my country would be worse than banishment; a palace would be a prison; a crown would be a miserable comfort to one that has cast away his comfort, and is going to everlasting shame and woe. Were we but duly sensible of the worth of love, and the odiousness and malignity that is

in the want of it, it would keep us from being quiet in the daily neglect of it, and would quicken us to seek, and to stir it up!—*Works*, vol. i. p. 117.

CHAP. IV.—*Folly of Sin.*

TAKE every temptation in its naked proper sense, as coming from the devil, and tending to damnation, by enticing your hearts from your subjection unto God: suppose you saw the devil himself in his instruments offering you the bait of preferment, or honour, or riches, or fleshly lust, or sports, or of delightful meats, or drinks, to tempt you to excess; and suppose you heard him say to you plainly, “take this for thy salvation; sell me for this thy God, and thy soul, and thy everlasting hopes; commit this sin, that thou mayst fall under the judgment of God, and be tormented in hell with me for ever. Do this to please thy flesh, that thou mayst displease thy God, and grieve thy Saviour: I cannot draw thee to hell, but by drawing thee to sin; and I cannot make thee sin against thy will, nor undo thee, but by thy own consent and doing; therefore I pray thee consent, and do it thyself, and let me have thy company in torments.” This is the naked meaning of every temptation; suppose therefore you saw and heard all this, with what determination then would you reject it? With what horror would you fly from the most enticing bait?—*Works*, vol. i. p. 70.

CHAP. V.—*Hardness of Heart.*

LABOUR for a full apprehension of the evil and danger of a hardened heart. It is the death of the soul, so far as it prevaleth; at the easiest, it is like the stupidity of a paralytical member, or a seared part. Observe the names which scriptures giveth it; the hardening of the heart, (*Prov. xxviii. 14*); the hardening of the neck, (*Prov. xxix. 10*), which signifieth inflexibility; the hardening the face, which signifieth impudency, (*Prov. xxi. 29*); the searedness of the conscience, (*1 Tim. iv. 2*); the impenitency of the heart, (*Rom. ii. 5*). Sometimes it is called sottishness, or stupidity (*Jer. iv. 22*). Sometime it is called a not caring, or not laying things to heart, and not regarding, (*Is. xlii. 25*, and *v. 12*, and *xxxii. 9, 10, 11*). Sometime it is denominated metaphorically from inanimates, a face harder than a rock, (*Jer. v. 3*); stony hearts, (*Ezek. xi. 19*, and *xxxvi. 26*); a neck with an iron sinew, (*Isa. xlviii. 4*), and a brow of brass; it is called sleep, and a deep slumber, and a spirit of slumber, (*Rom. xiii. 11*, and *xi. 8*; *Matt. xxv. 5*); and death itself, (*1 Tim. v. 6*; *Ephes. ii. 1, 5*; *Col. ii. 13*; *Jude, xii*).—*Works*, vol. i. p. 163.

CHAP. VI.—*Evil Thoughts.*

As to the case of *fleshly lusts*; if your bodily temper be addicted to it, as you love your soul, keep at a sufficient distance from the bait. If you feel your fancy begin to be infected towards any person, whose comeliness enticeth you, be sure

that you never be with them alone without necessity, and that you never be guilty of any immodest looks, or touch or words; but keep at such a distance that it may be almost *impossible* for you to sin. You little know what you have done, when you have first broke the bounds of modesty; you have set open the door of your fancy to the devil; so that he can almost at his pleasure ever after, represent the same sinful pleasure to you anew: he hath now access to your fancy to stir up (*James*, i. 13, 14) lustful thoughts and desires; so that when you should think of your calling, or of your God, or of your soul, your thoughts will be worse than swinish, upon the filth that is not fit to be named. If the devil here get in a foot, he will not easily be got out. And if you should be once guilty of fornication, it will first strongly tempt you to it again, and the devil will say, if once may be pardoned, why not twice? and if twice, why not thrice? And next, the flames of hell will be hotter in your conscience, than the flames of lust were in your flesh; and if God do not give you up to hardness of heart, and utterly (*1 Thes.* iii. 7) forsake you, you will have no rest till you return from sin to God; which, if you be so happy as to do, you little think how dear it may cost you; what terrors! (*Psal.* li.) what heart-breaking! and perhaps a sad and disconsolate life even to your death.

And you will not suffer alone: O what a grief will it be to all the godly, that know or hear of you? What a reproach to religion? What a hardening to the wicked, to make them hate religion to their damnation? The malignant will triumph, and say, no doubt, they are all alike: these are your puritans! your precisians! your holy brethren! And if you thus wound religion, God will wound

your conscience and reputation at the last.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 185.

Rather than you will spend one hour in a day or a week in serious thoughts of the state of your souls, and the life to come, you will cast them away upon news and tales, and other people's business that do not concern you; yea, you will cast them down the sink of covetousness and malice, and lust, and wantonness, and make them servants to the devil and the flesh. If you have a brook running by your land, you will endeavour to turn it over your ground, that seeing it must run, it may as well run where it may do good, as run in vain. So when your thoughts must run, is it not better that you turn them to your own hearts and states, to prepare for the world that you are ready to step into, than to let them run in vain? If you see a man go into a wine-cellar (though it be his own), and pull out all the spiggets, and let the wine run about the cellar, and suffer no body to catch it, or be the better for it, what would you conceive of the wisdom and charity of that man? Your thoughts are a thing more precious than wine, and such a thing as should not be spilt. And yet is not this your every day's practice? You are before him that know your thoughts; deny it if you can. What hour of the day can a man come to you, and find your thoughts altogether idle? What minute of an hour can a man come and ask you, *what are you now thinking on?* and you can truly say, *nothing*. I know as long as you are awake you are always thinking of somewhat (and perhaps when you are a sleep), and what is it on? This body shall have a thought, and that body a thought; every word you hear, and every wrong that's done you, almost every thing you

look upon, shall have a thought; and God and your own salvation shall have none; that is, you will loose them, and let them run in waste; but you will do no good with them, nor take in any profit by them to yourselves.—*Direct. to a sound Conversion*, 12mo. 1702, p. 50.

Another part of *self* to be mortified and denied, is self-imagination.

It is the *selfishness* of men's thoughts that is the *vanity* of their thoughts; and these are the *imaginations that are only evil continually*. The thoughts should be let out on God and his service; so that our *meditation of him should be sweet, and we should delight in the Lord*, (*Psal. civ. 34*), and in the multitude of our thoughts within us, his comforts should delight our souls, (*Psal. xciv. 19*). His word should be our meditation all the day, (*Psal. cxix. 97, 99*); and in his law we should meditate day and night, (*Psal. i. 2*). God should be the spring, the end, the sum of all our thoughts; if we find a thought in our minds that savoureth not of God, yea, that is not sent by him, and doing his work, we must disown it, apprehend it, and cast it out. But alas, how contrary is the case with the most? As *self* is advanced highest in their imagination, so doth it there attract and dispose of the thoughts. What are all the thoughts of unsanctified men employed for, but for *themselves and theirs*? Their fantasies hunt about the world; but it's their own game and pleasure that they range about. The thoughts of one man run upon his covetousness, and another man's upon his filthy lusts, and another man's on his sports and pleasures, and another upon his honour and reputation with men! They feed the imaginations of their mind upon almost nothing but *selfish*

things ! sometimes delighting themselves with the very *thoughts* of men's esteem of them, or of their worldly plenty, or of their sinful lusts and pleasures, and sometimes troubling themselves with the *thoughts* of their wants, or low condition, or crosses, or injuries from men ; sometimes contriving how they may attain their desires, and carking and caring for accomplishing their *selfish* ends. Morning and evening, at home and abroad, as the thoughts of the sanctified are on God and heaven, and the way thereto, so the thoughts of the unsanctified are all upon *self* and the interest of *self*, and the means thereto. O cleanse your minds, sirs, of this great *self-pollution* ; keep them more clean and chaste to God. Deny self this room in your imaginations, and waste not thoughts and precious time, on such unjust and unprofitable employment.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 370.

CHAP. VII.—*Wilful Sins.*

THE remembrance of the *wilfulness* of sinning, and how poor a bait prevailed with us, and what mercies and motives we bore down, will make us so displeased and angry with ourselves, and so to loathe such naughty hearts as will not admit a speedy or easy reconciliation. Yea, when we remember that we sinned against knowledge, even when we remembered that God did see us, and that we offended him, it will keep us long in doubt of our sincerity in the soul, and make us afraid, lest still we have the same hearts, and should again do the same if we had the same temptations. Never look for joy or peace as long as you live in wilful and beloved sin : this thorn must be

taken out of your hearts before you will be eased of the pain ; unless God leave you to a senseless heart, and Satan give you a deceitful peace, which doth but prepare for greater sorrow.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 839.

If your heart be not, (*Psal.* xxxii. 1, 2, 3) sincere in your *consent* to the covenant, you will remain unpardoned in your sin and misery till it be sincere.

If you fall into a *particular sin*, you must be restored by *renewed repentance* for it through faith in Christ. But as you love God and your soul, take heed of wilful sinning.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 179.



CHAP. VIII.—*Habitual Sins.*

A COMMON cause of trouble of mind is the *guilt of some great and wilful sin*, when conscience is convinced, and yet the soul is not converted, sin is beloved, and yet feared : God's wrath doth terrify them, and yet not enough to overcome their sin ; some live in secret fraud and robbery, and many in drunkenness and fleshly lusts, either self-pollution or fornication, and they know that for such things the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience ; and yet the rage of appetite and lust prevaieth, and they despair and sin ; and while the sparks of hell fall on their consciences, it changeth neither heart nor life, there is some more hope of the recovery of these than of dead-hearted or unbelieving sinners, who work uncleanness with greediness, as being past feeling, and blinded to defend their sins, and plead against holy obedience to God. Brutishness is not so bad as *diabolism* and

malignity. Their sorrow is not otermuch, but too little, as long as it will not restrain them from their sin.

But yet if God convert these persons, the sins which they now live in, may possibly hereafter plunge their souls into such depths of sorrow, in the review, as may swallow them up.

And when men truly converted, yet dally with the bait, and renew the wounds of their consciences by their lapses, it is no wonder if their sorrow and terrors are renewed. Grievous sins have fastened so on the conscience of many, as have cast them into incurable melancholy and distraction.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 837.

CHAP. IX.—*The Carnal Mind.*

A CARNAL mind apprehendeth not a *suitableness* in the spiritual and heavenly things to his mind, and therefore he sets light by them. When you tell him of everlasting glory, he heareth you as if you were persuading him to go play with the sun; they are matters of another world, and out of his element; and therefore he hath no more delight in them, than a fish would have to be in the fairest meadow, or than a swine hath in a jewel, or a dog in a piece of gold: they may be good to others, but he cannot apprehend them as suitable to him, because he hath a nature that is otherwise inclined; he savoureth not of the things of the spirit, (*Rom.* viii. 5.)—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 731.

CHAP. X.—*The Worldly Mind.*

O what a strange and horrible thing it is, that the man that hath the wit to manage his affairs as plausibly as any of his neighbours, that can over-wit others in matters of the world; that can govern towns and countries; that is learned in his profession, in law, in physic, in merchandize, in navigation, or any the like, I say that a man of so deep a reach, so plodding and active a wit as this, should yet be unresolved, yea thirty or forty years old be unresolved, whether to be sanctified, or unsanctified; whether to be holy and saved, or to be unholy, though God hath professed expressly, that such shall not see the face of God, (*Heb. xii. 14*). These are our wise men, these are too many (besides the ignorant countrymen) of our gentlemen, our worshipful, our honourable men, our great scholars, and men of noble or reverend esteem; and yet are unresolved, whether to be saved or damned. Though God hath written a bible to resolve them, and a thousand books are written to resolve them, and preachers are studying and preaching to resolve them; and a thousand mercies are cast into the scales, that one would think should help to turn them; and some sharp afflictions are helping to resolve them, and twenty or forty years' certain experience of the vanity of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, of honours, of pleasures, and the unprofitableness of sin, one would think should resolve them; yet after all they are unresolved, whether they should presently let go their sin, and whether God or the flesh should be pleased or displeased? If this be the wisdom of

these men, the Lord bless me and all his chosen, from such wisdom.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 604.

An earthly mind is an hindrance to be carefully avoided. God and Mammon, earth and heaven, cannot both have the delight of thy heart. When the heavenly believer is blessing himself in his God, and rejoicing in hope of the glory to come; perhaps thou art blessing thyself in thy worldly prosperity, and rejoicing in hope of thy thriving here. When he is comforting his soul in the views of Christ, of angels and saints, whom he shall live with for ever; thou art comforting thyself with thy wealth, in looking over thy bills and bonds, thy goods, thy cattle, or thy buildings, and in thinking of the favour of the great, of the pleasure of a plentiful estate, of larger provision for thy children after thee, of the advancement of thy family, or the increase of thy dependents. If Christ pronounced him a fool, that said, Soul, take thine ease, thou hast much laid up for many years; how much more so art thou, who, knowingly, speakest in thy heart the same words? Tell me, what difference between this fool's expressions, and thy affections? Remember, thou hast to do with the searcher of hearts. Certainly, so much as thou delightest, and takest up thy rest on earth, so much of thy delight in God is abated. Thine earthly mind may consist with thine outward profession and common duties; but it cannot consist with this heavenly duty. Thou thyself knowest how seldom and cold, how cursory and reserved thy thoughts have been of the joys above, ever since thou didst tread so eagerly for the world. O, the cursed madness of many that seem to be religious! They thrust themselves into a multitude

of employments, till they are loaded with labours, and clogged with cares, and their souls are as unfit to converse with God, as a man to walk with a mountain on his back; and as unapt to soar in meditation, as their bodies to leap above the sun! And when they have lost that heaven upon earth, which they might have had, they take up with a few rotten arguments to prove it lawful; though indeed they cannot. I advise thee, Christian, who have tasted the pleasures of a heavenly life, as ever thou wouldst taste of them any more, avoid this devouring gulph of an earthly mind. If once thou come to this, that thou wilt be rich, thou fallest into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts. (*1 Tim. vi. 9*). Keep these things loose about thee, like thy upper garments, that thou mayst lay them by whenever there is need; but let God and glory be next thy heart. Ever remember, that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God. (*James iv. 4*). Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him, (*1 John ii. 15*). This is plain dealing, and happy he that faithfully receives it!—*Saints Rest*, p. 244.

As the creature would be man's felicity, or any part of his true felicity, so it is to be hated, resisted, and crucified. If the world would know its own place; but if it will needs pretend to be what it is not, and will promise to do what it cannot, and so would not only be *used*, but *enjoyed*, we must take it for a deceiver.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 450.

Whom will you match with God? or set up against him, and prefer before him? What will

you choose, if you choose not him? What shall be your portion instead of heaven? Doth it excuse you, that the world hath so lovely an aspect? Yes, if God be not more amiable than it, and if his face and favour be not more desirable. Doth it excuse you that the baits of the world are pleasant, and that it offered you fair? Yes, if God had not outbid it, and offered you ten thousand times more. Doth it excuse you that the world is near and certain, and heaven uncertain, or out of sight? Yes, if you are beasts that have no reason to know what will be, but only sense to feel what is; or if God have not given you an infallible promise, befriended by reason, sealed by multitudes of uncontrolled miracles, and transcribed on his servants' hearts; and if the greatness of the glory promised were not sufficient to do more at a distance with a man of faith and reason, than childish trifles near at hand; as the sun at a distance giveth us more light, than a glow-worm that is hard by. Yea, and if the world, which you think so certain, were not certainly transitory and vain; so that he that gets it, is certain shortly to be no gainer; and he that loseth it, to be no loser. It is one thing to take God and heaven for your portion, as believers do, and another thing to be desirous of *it as a reserve when you can keep the world no longer.* It's one thing to submit to heaven, as a lesser evil than hell; and another thing to desire it as a greater good than earth. It's one thing to lay up treasures and hopes in heaven, and seek it first; and another thing to be contented with it in our necessity, and to seek the world before it, and give God that the flesh can spare. Thus differeth the religion of serious christians, and of carnal worldly hypocrites.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 439-40.

The *believer* must have *heaven secured*, and God obeyed. Men sell not their souls for *sorrow*, but for *mirth*; they forsake not heaven for *poverty*, but for *riches*; they turn not away from God for the love of *sufferings* and dishonour, but for the love of *pleasure*, *preferments*, dignities and estimation in the world. And is that state better, and more desirable for which all that perish turn from God, and sell their souls, and are befooled and undone for ever? Or that which no man ever sinned for, nor forsook God for, or was undone for? Read over this question once again, and mark what answer your *hearts* give to it, if you would know whether you live by sense or faith? And mark what contrary answers the *flesh* and *faith* will give it when it comes to practice? I say, though many sin in *poverty* and in *sufferings*, and in *disgrace*, yea, and *by occasion* of them, and by their temptations, yet no man ever sinned for them: they are none of the bait that stealed away the heart from God. Set deep upon your heart, the sense of the danger of a prosperous state, and fear and vigilancy will help to save you.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 627.

Such a *bedlam* is most of the world become, where madness goeth for the only wisdom, and he is the bravest man that can sin and be damn'd with reputation and renown, and successfully drive or draw the greatest number with him into *hell*; to which the world hath no small likeness, forsaking God, and being very much forsaken by him.

This is the world which standeth in competition for my love, with the spiritual blessed world: much of God's mercies and comforts I have here had; but their sweetness was their taste of divine love, and their tendency to heavenly perfection.

What was the end and use of all the good that ever I saw, or that ever God did for my soul or body, but to teach me to love him, and long for more? How many weaning experiences? How many thousand bitter or contemning thoughts have I had of all the glory and pleasures of this world? How many thousand love-tokens from God have called me to believe and taste his goodness? Wherever I go, and which way so ever I look, I see VANITY and VEXATION written upon all things in this world, so far as they stand in competition with God, and would be the end and portion of a fleshly mind; and I see HOLINESS TO THE LORD written upon every thing so far as it declareth God, and leadeth me to him as my ultimate end. God hath not for nothing engaged me in a war against this world, and commanded me to take and use it as mine enemy. The *emptiness, dangerousness, and bitterness* of the world, and the *all-sufficiency, trustiness, and goodness* of God, have been the sum of all the experiences of my life; and shall a worldly backward heart overcome the teachings of nature, scripture, the spirit of grace and all experience? Far be it from me!—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 715.

Alas! what did man when he forsook the love and obedience of his God? How just is it that this flesh and world should become our prison, which we would make *our home*, and would not use as our Lord appointed us, as our servant and way to our better state? Though our *way* must not be *our home*, our father would not have been so strange to us in the *way*, if we had not unthankfully turned away from his grace and love.

It is to us, that know not the mysteries of infinite wisdom, the saddest thought that ever doth possess

our minds, to consider that there is no more grace and holiness, knowledge of God, and communion with him in this world: that so few are saints, and those few so lamentably defective and imperfect, that when the sun shineth on all the earth, the sun of righteousness shineth on so small a part of it, and so few live in the love of God, and the joyful hopes of future blessedness; and those few have so low a measure of it, and are corrupted and troubled with so many contrary affections. Infinite goodness is not undisposed to do good: he that made us capable of holy and heavenly affections, gave us not that capacity in vain. And yet, alas! how little of God and glory taketh up the hearts of men!

But man hath no cause to grudge at God: the devils, before their fall, were not made indefectible: divine wisdom is delighted in the diversity of his works, and maketh them not all of equal excellency. Free will was to act its part: hell is not to be as good as heaven, and sin hath made earth to be next to hell: so much sin, so much hell: what is sin but a wilful forsaking of God? And can we forsake him, and yet love him and enjoy his love? God's kingdom is not to be judged of by his jail or gibbets. And if my want of knowledge and love of God, and joyful communion with the heavenly society, be my prison, and as the suburbs of hell, should it not make me long for the day of my redemption, and the glorious liberty of the sons of God? My true desires of deliverance, and of holiness and perfection, are my evidences that I shall obtain them.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 907.

When the devil and the flesh will make it their bait to draw away our hearts from God, and to steal that love, desire, and care, which is due to

him, and begin to tell us of rest, or satisfaction, or felicity here, it's time to cry out, Crucify it, crucify it.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 451.

Alas, to be merry for a day, and then to lye in misery for ever, is a thing deserving no encouragement. We see it's a *merry world* with many that have least cause of mirth; but *how long will they continue it?* To see a man laugh and play, and feast in a chariot that drives on so fast to death, in a vessel that is in so swift a stream that ends in the gulf of endless horror, is a doleful sight. O how quickly will that merry countenance turn sad; and those proud looks be turned to an earthly paleness, and those wanton eyes be mouldered to dust, and leave the empty holes to warn the next spectators to use his eyes more wisely while he hath them? How quickly will these same sensual persons exchange their mirth for sighs and groans, and endless torments, and fruitless lamentations, when they shall have everlasting leisure to peruse their lives, and to consider of their ways, which now there is no persuading them to consider of?—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 814.

How foolish and unsafe it is to *think* and *speak*, and *do* as the *most* do, unless you would speed as the most do for ever; and how unmeet it is for them to be conformed to this world, who hope to be for ever separated from them?—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 190.

Mark any that grow more in loving and caring for unnecessary, *wordly* fleshly things, and you shall find that they grow more indifferent to *prayer*, and to all holy exercises that employ the mind; a little of this will serve their turns: mark them that

overmind their *ornaments*, their *conveniences*, their *appetites*, or their *worldly* gain, and you shall see how heartless and dead they grow towards God, and holiness, and heaven, when shadows seem substances, and substance goeth but for a shadow; a little of God will serve them, when a little of the world will not serve them, and spiritual things lose all their sweetness, when fleshly pleasures and hopes grow too sweet.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 693.

Are those so sincerely devoted to Christ? And do they so deny themselves, whose daily thoughts, and care, and labour, is how they may live in more reputation and content, and may be better provided for the satisfying of their flesh? If they be low and poor, and their condition is displeasing to them, their greatest care is to repair to their minds; if they be higher and more wealthy, their business is to keep it or increase it, that hunt after honour, and thirst after a thriving and more plenteous state; that can stretch their consciences to the size of all times, and humour those that they think may advance them, and be most humble servants to those above them, and contemptuously neglect whoever is below them; that will put their hands to the feet of those that they hope to rise by, and put their feet on the necks of their subdued adversaries, and trample upon all that stand in their way; that applaud not men for their honesty, but their worldly honours, and will magnify that man while he is capable of advancing them, whom they would have scorned, if Providence had laid him in the dust; that are friends to all that befriend their interest and designs, and enemies to the more upright that cross them in their course; that love not men so much because they love God, as because they

love them : are these devoted to God, or to themselves ?—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 712.

See that the flesh be thoroughly mortified, and your hearts be thoroughly taken off the world, and all its pleasures, profits, and honours, and that you think not of reconciling God and the world, as if you might secure an interest in both.

This is a very common cause of deceit and destruction to such as think they are converted. It is the very nature and business of true conversion, to turn men's hearts from the flesh, and from the world, to God, and from an earthly and seeming happiness, to a heavenly and everlasting happiness. And when men are affrighted into some kind of religiousness, and yet never learn to deny themselves, and never mortified their fleshly mind, but the love of the world is still the chiefest principal at their hearts; and so go on in profession of godliness, with a secret reserve that they will look as well as they can to their outward prosperity, whatever become of their religion, and they will have no more to do with the matters of another world, than may stand with their bodily safety in this world; and these are the deceived deluded hypocrites, whose hopes will prove as the giving up of the ghost? whom Christ will disown in their greatest extremities, after all their seeming religiousness. O sirs, look to this, as ever you would be happy. It's an easy, it's a common, it's a most dangerous thing, to set upon a course of outward piety, and yet keep the world next your hearts, and take it still as a great part of your felicity, and secretly to love your former lusts, while you appear to be converted. The heart is so deceitful, that you have great cause to watch it narrowly in this point ;

it will closely cherish the love of the world, and your fleshly pleasures, when you seem to renounce them, and your tongue can speak contemptuously of them. If you will needs have happiness in this world, in the contenting of the flesh, there is no hopes of having it in another world, in the fruition of God. God will not call that love to him sincere, which is not a superlative love, and make you to hate all those things that would draw away your affections and obedience from him, (*Luke*, xiv. 26, 27). Can you voluntarily, for the love of Christ and the hopes of glory, take up your cross and follow him in poverty, in losses, in reproaches, through scorns, and scourgings, and prisons, and death? Do you value his loving kindness better than life? (*Psal.* lxiii. 3). Can you deny your eyes and your appetites their desires? Can you consent to be vile in the eyes of men? If you cannot consent to those terms, you cannot be christians, nor you cannot be saved. If you must needs be rich or must be honourable, yea, if you must needs save your estates, or liberties, or lives, it's past all question, you must needs let go Christ and glory: if you must needs have the world, you must needs loose your souls. If you must have your good things here, you must not have them hereafter too, but be tormented when Christ's sufferers are comforted, (*Luke*, xvi. 25).—*Works*, vol. ii. 582.

CHAP. XI.—*Sensuality.*

THOUGH *selfishness* hath defiled the whole man, yet *sensual pleasure* is the chief part of its interest, and therefore by the senses it commonly works, and these are the doors and windows by which ini-

quity entereth into the soul ; and therefore a principal part of *self-denial*, consisteth in denying the sensitive appetite.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 371.

CHAP. XII.—*Pride.*

THERE are two sad instances of pride which are too familiarly seen among us. The one is the case of many *convinced hypocrites*, yea, and many passionate feeble christian, who are affrighted with the terrors of the Lord, and partly disturbed by their guilt, or passions, and partly take it to be an honourable sign of humility to condemn themselves ; and therefore will fill the ears of ministers with sad complaints of their fears and doubts, and sins, and wants, as if they would hardly be kept from desperation. And yet if they know that another doth believe them, and think and speak as bad of them as they speak of themselves ; yea, if he do but slight and prefer others before them, or plainly reprove them for any disgraceful sin, they swell with the wrath of pride against him, and will not easily think or speak well of such a one : and they love him best that thinketh best of them, and praiseth them most, even when they most dispraise themselves ; which sheweth that a man may be really *humbled* in some respects, and seem to be humble in more, and yet at the heart be dangerously proud.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 633.

The unconverted are abominable to God ; I know many persons that are most deeply guilty, especially men of honor and esteem in the world, who would scorn to have the title of sinners given to them. But verily, God is not fearful of of-

fending them, nor so tender of their defiled honour as they are of their own, or as they expect the preacher should be.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 12, *Christian Direct*.

CHAP. XIII.—*Idleness and Sloth.*

IDLENESS is a constant sin, and labour is a duty: idleness is but the devil's home for temptation, and for unprofitable, distracting musings: labour profiteth others, and ourselves.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 844.

When men have time to spare: this is a most evident mark of idleness; for God hath given us no time in vain; but hath given us full work, for all our time.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 639.—Read the whole passage, for it is excellent.

A slothful spirit is an impediment to a heavenly life, and I verily think there is nothing hinders it more than this in men of a good understanding. If it were only the exercise of the body, the moving of the lips, the bending of the knee; men would as commonly step to heaven, as they go to visit a friend. But to separate our thoughts and affections from the world, to draw forth all our graces, and increase each in its proper object, and to hold them to it till the work prospers in our hands; this, this is the difficulty.—*Saints Rest*, p. 251.—The whole passage is interesting.

CHAP. XIV.—*Dissipation.*

AVOID those tempting and deluding objects, which are still enticing your hearts from obedience; and avoid that diverting crowd, and noise of company, or worldly business, which drowns the voice of God's commands.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 70.

Your mirth is *disingenuous* and *dishonest*, as long as you are without a title to heaven: you slight the Lord, that can find such matters of rejoicing, when you have not his favour to rejoice in, and are under his displeasure! While you are refusing Christ, abusing grace, resisting the spirit, serving the flesh, and undoing your own souls, it cannot be an *honest* or *ingenuous* thing for such as you to live in joy.

If your mirth were truly *honourable*, to you it were the more excusable. But to laugh in sin and misery, and make merry so near the endless woe, is a greater shame to your understandings, than to make sport to set your house on fire: this is the laughter of which *Solomon* might well say, *thou art mad*; and the mirth of which he saith, *what doth it?* (Eccl. ii. 2.)—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 814.

Would thy *mirth* do thee *any good* we would not discourage it; yea, if it did not do thee *harm*. But, O how many are now in sorrow by the means of their unseasonable sinful mirth? They are too jocund to hear the preacher, or their consciences, or to observe the checks and motions of God's spirit; or to spend now and then an hour in retired, sober thoughts of their everlasting state. Should we but presume to call them to exercise their reason, and mind them of these most needful things,

and tell them, O poor distracted mortals, your time is given you for greater things than to fiddle, and dance, and drink, and jest, and prate, and compliment it away; should we not be thought morose, or melancholy, or fanaticks?—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 814.

CHAP. XV.—*Ingratitude.*

THOSE men that seek themselves, and live to themselves, and not to God, are unfaithful and treacherous both to God and man. As they neglect God in prosperity, so they do but flatter him in adversity, (*Psal.* lxxviii. 34, 35, 36, 37).—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 713.

CHAP. XVI.—*Hypocrisy.*

THE self-deceiving hypocrite doth frequently pretend to an *exceeding great reverence in the managing of the outward part of worship*; and to an extraordinary zeal about the circumstantial_s of religion. He accounts them all *scismatical and prophane*, that place not as much of their religion as he doth in gestures and forms, and other accidents of worship, acquainting us, that the pharasaical temper in religion is natural, and will continue in the world.

If the temptation of the hypocrite lie on the other side, he can withdraw himself into some small or separating society, and place his religion in the singularity of his opinions, or in the strictness of the way and party that he owneth, and in

his conceited ability in his conceived or ready expressions in prayer; and can cry out as much upon the formalist, as the formal hypocrite upon him, and glory in his zeal, as the other in his moderation. It is in the heart that hypocrisy hath its throne, from whence it can command the outward acts into any shapes that are agreeable to its ends; and can use materials of divers natures as the fuel and nutriment of its malignity. And whatever party such are joined to, and whatever way they have been trained up to, whether formality, or schism, or more regular, sober, equal ways, in all of them their religion is but *vain*, and they do but *deceive themselves* by all.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 448.

CHAP. XVII.—*Sin of Inattention.*

WHAT barbarous, yea, devilish; yea, worse than devilish ingratitude is this? The devils never had a Saviour offered them, but thou hast, and dost thou yet make light of him?—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 735.

That which men highly esteem, they will so diligently seek after, that you may see it in the *success*, if it be a matter within their reach. You may see how many make light of Christ, by the little knowledge they have of him, and the little communion with him, and communication from him; and the little, yea none of his special graces in them. Alas! How many ministers can speak it to the sorrow of their hearts, that many of their people know almost nothing of Christ, though they hear of him daily! Nor know they what they must do to be saved: if we ask them an account of these things, they answer as if they understood not what we say

to them, and tell us they are no scholars, and therefore think they are excusable for their ignorance. Oh, if these men had not made light of Christ, and their salvation, but had bestowed but half so much pains to know and enjoy him, as they have done to understand the matters of the trades and callings in the world, they would not have been so ignorant as they are; they make light of these things, and therefore will not be at the pains to study or learn them. When men that can learn the hardest trade in a few years, have not learned a catechism, nor how to understand the creed, under twenty or thirty years preaching, nor cannot abide to be questioned about such things; doth not this shew that they have slighted them in their hearts? How will these despisers of Christ and salvation be able one day to look him in the face, and to give an account of these neglects?—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 735.

A man that hath a *cause* to be heard *to-morrow*, in which his *life* or *honour* is concerned, *cannot forget it*: A wretch that is condemned to die *to-morrow*, cannot forget it. And yet poor sinners, that are continually uncertain to live an hour, and certain speedily to see the majesty of the Lord, to their unconceivable joy or terror, as sure as now they live on earth, can forget these things for which they have their memory; and which one would think should drown the matters of this world, as the report of a cannon doth a whisper, or as the sun obscureth the poorest glow-worm. O wonderful stupidity of an unrenewed soul! O wonderful folly and distractedness of the ungodly! That ever men *can forget*, I say again, that they *can forget*, eternal joy, eternal woe, and the eternal God, and the place of their eternal unchangeable abode, when

they stand even at the door, and are passing in, and there is but the thin veil of flesh between them and that amazing sight, that eternal gulf; and they are daily dying, and even stepping in. O could you *keep* your honours here for *ever*; could you *ever* wear that gay attire, and gratify your flesh with meats, and drinks, and sports, and lusts; could you *ever* keep your rule and dignity, or your earthly life in *any state*, you had some *little poor* excuse for not *remembering* the eternal things, as a man hath, that preferreth his candle before the sun: but when death is *near and inexorable*, and you are sure to die as you are sure to live; when every man of you that sitteth in these seats to day can say, *I must shortly be in another world, where all the pomp and pleasure of this world will be forgotten, or remembered but as my sin and folly*, one would think it were *impossible* for any of you to be ungodly, and to *remember* the *trifles* and *nothings* of the world, while you *forget* that everlasting all, whose reality, necessity, magnitude, excellency, concernment, and duration, are such, as should take up all the powers of your souls, and continually command the service and attendance of your thoughts against all seekers, and contemptible competitors whatsoever. But alas, though you have the *greatest helps* (in subserviency to these commanding objects), yet *will you not remember* the matters which alone deserve remembrance.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 799.

CHAP. XVIII.—*Sins of Memory.*

THE crowd of cares and worldly businesses, and the tumultuous noise of foolish sports, and other

sensual passions and delights, do take up the minds of the unconverted, and turn them from the observation of the things of the greatest everlasting consequence. They have a memory for *sin* and the *flesh*, to which they are *alive*; but not for things spiritual and eternal, to which they are *dead*. They remember not God himself as *God* with any effectual remembrance; *God is not in all their thoughts*, (*Psal. x. 4*). They live as *without him in the world*, (*Eph. ii. 12*). And if they *remember not God*, they cannot *remember sin as sin*, whose malignity lieth in its opposition to the *will* and *holiness* of God.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 799.

CHAP. XIX.—*Self-dependence.*

Is it not incomparably more honourable to be God's, than to be your own? And to live to him than to yourselves? The object and end doth nobilitate the act, and thereby the agent. It is more honourable to serve a prince than a ploughman. That man that least seeks his own honour or carnal interest, but most freely denieth it, and most entirely seeks the honour of God, is the most highly honoured with God and good men, when self-seekers defraud themselves of their hopes.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 713.

He hath an ill master that is ruled by himself. A master that is blind, and proud, and passionate, that will lead you unto precipices, and thence deject you; that will effectually ruin you, when he thinks he is doing you the greatest good; whose work is bad, and his wages no better, that feedeth his servants in plenty, but as swine, and in the

day of famine denieth them the husks: whatever you may now imagine while you are distracted with sensuality, I dare say, if ever God bring you to yourselves, you will consider that it is better to be in your father's house, where the poorest servant hath bread enough, than to be fed with dreams and pictures, and to perish with hunger: reject not God till you have found a better master.

If you will needs be your own, and seek yourselves, you disengage God from dealing with you as *his* in a gracious sense: If you will not trust him, nor venture yourselves upon his promise and conduct, but will shift for yourselves, then look to yourselves as well as you can; save yourselves in danger, cure your own diseases, quiet your own consciences, grapple with death in your strength, plead your own cause in judgment, and save yourselves from hell if you can; and when you have done, go and boast of your own sufficiency and achievements, and tell men how little you were beholden to Christ. Woe to you, if upon these provocations God should give you over to provide for yourselves, and leave you without any other salvation than your own power is able to effect.—*Works*, vol. iv. y. 713.

Trust not yourselves too far; the will goeth not against the mind's apprehensions; and a man's mind is a very dark, weak, mutable thing: what a temptation, or a subtle wrangler, or argument, or a new thought may do upon us, we do not well know. Presumption seldom escapeth danger. A wise man feareth and departeth from evil: confidence in our own understanding, goodness and stability, is the prognostick of back sliding. Away from the temptations which do most strongly allure the flesh: to be over-pleased with things temporal

and sensible, turneth the heart from things spiritual and eternal. To desire a more pleasing condition to the flesh, is to desire stronger temptations and greater danger to the soul.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 703-4.

CHAP. XX.—*Procrastination.*

SOME that are convinced, do *put off* their conversion with *delays*, (*Mat.* xxv. 3, 8, 12, and xxiv. 43, 44), and think it is time enough hereafter, and are purposing till it be *too late*, and life, and time and hope be ended. And some that see there is a necessity of holiness, are cheated by some *dead opinions* or *names*, or *shows* and *images of holiness*; (*John*, viii. 39, 42, 44; *Rom.* iii. 1, 2; *Gal.* iv. 29; *Mat.* xiii. 19, 20, 21, 22; *Mat.* xv. 2, 3, 6; *Gal.* i. 14); either because they hold a *strict opinion*, or because they are *baptized with water*, and observe the *outward parts of worship*; and perhaps because they offer God a great deal of *lip-service*, and *lifeless ceremony* which never savoured of a holy soul. Thus *deadness*, *sensuality*, and *hypocrisy*, do hinder millions from sanctification and salvation.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 198.

CHAP. XXI.—*Sins of Omission.*

SINS of omission are always accompanied with some positive sensual affection to the creature, which diverteth the soul, and causeth the omission; and so omission is no small part of the reigning sin.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 27.

CHAP. XXII.—*Counsellors pleading against their Consciences.*

IF all counsellors, and solicitors of causes, did truly take themselves for God's, and not their *own*, they durst not plead for, nor solicit a cause they knew which God disowneth. They would remember, that what they do against the innocent, or speak against a righteous cause, is done and said against their Lord, from whom they may expect ere long to hear, *inasmuch as you said or did this against the least of these, you said or did it against me.* God is the great patron of innocency, and the pleader of every righteous cause; and he that will be so bold as to plead against him, had need of a large fee to save him harmless. Say not, it is your calling, which you must live by, unless you that once listed yourselves in your baptism under Christ, will now take pay, and make it your profession to fight against him. The emptier your purses are of gain so gotten, the richer you are; or at least the fuller they are, you are so much the poorer. To deal freely with you, gentlemen, it is a matter that they who are strangers to your profession, can scarce put any fair construction upon; that the worst cause for a little money should find an advocate among you! This driveth the standers by upon this harsh *dilemma*, to think that either your understandings, or your consciences, are very bad. If indeed you so little know a good cause from a bad, then it must needs tempt men to think you very unskilful in your profession. But when almost every cause, even the worst that comes to the bar, shall have some of you for it, and some against it; and in the palpablest cases you are some on one side, and some on the other, the

strange difference of your judgments doth seem to betray their weakness: but if you know the causes to be bad which you defend, and to be good which you oppose, it more evidently betrays a deplorable conscience: I speak not of your innocent or excusable mistakes in cases of great difficulty, nor yet of excusing a cause bad in the main from unjust aggravations: but when money will hire you to plead for injustice against your own knowledge, and to use your wits to defraud the righteous, and spoil his cause, or vex him with delays, for the advantage of your unrighteous client, I would not have your conscience for all your gains, nor your accompt to make for all the world: it's sad that any known unrighteous cause, should have a professed christian in the face of a christian judicature to defend it, and *Satan* should plead by the tongues of men so deeply engaged to Christ; but it's incomparably more sad, that almost every unjust cause should find a patron, and no contentious, malicious person should be more ready to do wrong, than some lawyers to defend him for a (dear-bought) fee! Did you honestly obey God, and speak not a word against your judgment, but leave every unjust man to defend his own cause, what peace would it bring to your conscience? What honour to your now reproached profession? What relief to the oppressed? And what an excellent cure to the troublesome contentions of proud or malicious men? (1 Cor. vi.) — *Works*, vol. iv. p. 717.

CHAP. XXIII.—*Sins of Believers.*

THOUGH a *little sin* must be *hated*, and *universal obedience* must prove our sincerity, and no one sin must be wilfully continued in, yet it is certain that God's servants do not oft commit sins *materially* great and heinous (as fornication, drunkenness, perjury, oppression, deceit, &c.), and yet that they often commit some *lesser sins* (as idle thoughts, and idle words, and dullness in holy duties, defectiveness in the love of God, and omission of holy thoughts and words, &c.) ; and that the tempter oft getteth advantage even with them, by telling them that the *sin is small*, and such as God's servants ordinarily commit; and that naturally we fly with greater fear from a *great danger* than from a less; from a wound at the heart than a cut finger! And therefore one reason why *idle words* and *sinful thoughts* are even *deliberately* oftener committed than most heinous sins, is because the soul is not *awaked* so much by *fear* and *care* to make resistance; and love needeth the help of *fear* in this our weak condition.—*Life and Time*, p. 8.

Believers have oftener confessed their sins than others, and spoke odiously of it, as the vilest thing, and aggravated it to God and man.

Their many prayers against it, and all their labour in hearing, and reading, and sacraments, and other means, do aggravate it.

Their sins are aggravated by all the reproofs, and exhortations which they have used to others, to tell them how unreasonable and bad it is to provoke the Lord.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 80.

The more pleasure you have in sin, the more sorrow it will bring you; and the more you know it to be sin, and conscience tells you that God is against it, and yet you will go on, and bear down conscience, the sharper will conscience afterward afflict you, and the harder will it be quieted when it is awakened to repentance; yea, when a humbled soul is pardoned by grace, and believeth that he is pardoned, he will not easily forgive himself.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 839.

Even sin against knowledge and conscience are too oft committed by regenerate men; for they know more than others do, and their consciences are more active: happy were they indeed if they could be as good as they know they should be, and love God as much as they know they should love him, and were clear from all the relicts of passion and unbelief, which conscience tells them are their sins.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 842.

CHAP. XXIV.—*Consequences of Sin.*

ARE you well acquainted with the nature and degrees of future miseries which tempt you to think God is cruel? They are not all of one degree; what if still much of them be voluntary to the miserable souls? The devils who are now tormented in hell, are yet inhabitants of the air, and exercised in voluntary acts of malice. I take it to be no small degree of hell which the ungodly choose, and love and possess among us here upon earth, and will not be dissuaded from; they are without all holy communion with God, and they would be so; they are out of heaven, and they would be so; they are

debased and confined to sensual pleasures, and worldly vanities, and they will be so; they are the drudges of the devil and the servants of the flesh, and the slaves of men, and they would be so; they are defiled by sin, and imprisoned in their own consciences, and they would be so; they are corrupted, tantalized, and vexed, and tossed up and down by their irregular desires; in a word, they have the plague of sin, and have neither holiness, nor true happiness, and so they will have it to be, and will not be cured; now these tempted persons can see a misery in pain, but can see no such evil in sin, for which the pain should be inflicted; when as sin itself, and that which they are willing of, is so great a part of their misery, as that in this life, the rest is as nothing to it. And though, no doubt, much will be involuntary hereafter, we know not what the proportion will be between the voluntary and involuntary part.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 926.

And Whereas you tell us of preaching terribly to you, we cannot help it; if the true and righteous threatening of God be terrible to the guilty, it is because we know the terrors of the Lord that we preach them, to warn you to prevent them; and so did the Apostles before us, (2 Cor. v. 11). Either it's true, that the unquenchable fire will be the portion of the impenitent, unbelieving, fleshly, worldly, unsanctified men, or it is not true: if it were not true, the word of God were not true; and then what would you do with any preaching at all, or any religion! But if you confess it to be true, do you think in reason it should be silenced? Or can we tell men of so terrible a thing as hell, and tell them that it will certainly be their lot, unless they be new creatures, and not speak terribly to them? O sirs, it is the wonder of my soul, that

it seems no more terrible to all the ungodly, that think they do believe it. Yea, and I would that it did seem more terrible to the most, that it might affright you from your sin to God, and you might be saved. If you were running ignorantly into a coal-pit, would you revile him that told you of it, and bid you stop if you love your life? Would you tell him that he speaks bitterly or terribly to you? It is not the preacher that is the cause of your danger; he doth but tell you of it that you may escape. If you are saved you may thank him; but if you are lost you may thank yourselves. It's you that deal bitterly and terribly with yourselves. Telling you of hell, doth not make hell; warning you of it, is not causing it; nor is it God that is unmerciful, but you are foolishly cruel and unmerciful to yourselves. Do not think to despise the patience and mercy of the Lord, and then think to escape by accusing him of being unmerciful, and by saying, it's terrible doctrine we preach to you impenitent sinners! I confess to thee it is terrible, more terrible than thy senseless heart imagined, or yet is aware of. One day, if grace prevent it not, thou shalt find it ten thousand times more terrible than thou canst apprehend it now. When thou seest thy judge with millions of his angels coming to condemn thee, thou wilt then say, his laws are terrible indeed.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 803.

Use sin as it will use you. Spare it not, for it will not spare you. It is your murderer, and the murderer of the world; use it therefore as a murderer should be used. Kill it before it kills you; and then though it kill your bodies, it shall not be able to kill your souls; and though it bring you to the grave, as it did your head, it shall not be able to keep you there. If the thoughts of death and

the grave, and rottenness, be not pleasant to you, hearken to every temptation to sin, as you would hearken to a temptation to self-murder : and as you would do if the devil brought you a knife, and tempted you to cut your throat with it, so do when he offereth you the bait of sin. You love not death ; love not the cause of death.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 750.

BOOK II.

OF THE TRUTH, AND ESSENTIAL DOCTRINES OF
THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.CHAP. I.—*Of the Truth of Christianity.*

COMPARE the christian religion with all others in the world; and seeing it is certain that some way or other God hath revealed his will to guide man in his duty unto the end, you will see that it must needs be this :

1. The way of the *Heathenish idolaters* cannot be it; the *principles* and the *effects* of their religion may easily satisfy you of this. The only true God would not command idolatry, nor befriend such ignorance, error, and wickedness, as do constitute their religion, and are produced by it as its genuine fruits.

2. The way of *Judaism* cannot be it; for it doth but lead us up to christianity, and bear witness to Christ, and of itself is evidently insufficient; its multitude of ceremonies being but the pictures and alphabet of that truth which Christ hath brought to light, and which hath evidence, which to us is more convincing than that of the Jewish law.

3. The *Mahometan* delusion is so gross, that it seemeth vain to say any more against it, than it saith itself, unless it be to those who are bred up

in such darkness, as to hear of nothing else, and never to see the sun which shineth on the christian world, and withal are under the terror of the sword, which is the strongest reason of that barbarous sect.

4. And to think that the *Atheism* of infidels is the way (who hold only the five articles of the *Unity of God, the Duty of Obedience, the Immortality of the Soul, the Life of Retribution, and the Necessity of Repentance*), is but to go against the light. For, 1. It is a denial of that abundant evidence of the truth of the Christian faith, which cannot by any sound reason be confuted. 2. It is evidently too narrow for man's necessities, and leaveth our misery without a sufficient remedy. 3. Its inclusions and exclusions are extraordinary; it asserteth the necessity of *obedience* and *repentance*, and yet excludeth the necessary means (the revealed light, and love and power) by which both *obedience* and *repentance* must be had. It excludeth *Christ* and his spirit, and yet that which none but *Christ* and his spirit can effect. 4. It proposeth a way as the only religion which few ever went from the beginning (as to the *exclusions*), as if that were God's only way to heaven, which scarce any visible societies of men can be proved to have practised to this day.

Which of all these religions have the most wise, and holy, and heavenly, and mortified, and righteous, and sober persons to profess it, and the greatest number of such! If you will judge of the medicine by the effects, and take him for the best physician, who doth the greatest cures upon the souls, you will soon conclude that *Christ* is *the way, the truth, and the life, and no man cometh to the Father but by him*, (*John*, xiv. 6).—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 550.

Naturally men are prone to spin themselves a web of opinions out of their own brain, and to have a religion that may be called their *own*; and it's their *own* in two respects: 1. Because it is of their own devising, and not of God's revealing or appointing; 2. Because it suiteth with their own carnal ends and interests. Men are far readier to make themselves a faith, than to receive that which God hath formed to their hands, and they are far readier to receive a doctrine that tends to their carnal commodity, or honour or delights, than one that tends to self-denial, and to abase themselves and exalt the Lord.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 364.

The selfish unsanctified man disliketh God's government, at least in the particulars, and would govern himself. The law of God contained in his word and works he murmurs at as too obscure, or too precise and strict for him. He finds that it crosseth his carnal interest, and speaks not good of him but evil; and therefore he is against it, as supposing it to be against him, and his pleasure, profit, and honour, in the world. If men had but the government of themselves, what a difference would there be between their way and God's? If corrupt unsanctified selfish man might make a law for himself, instead of the word of God, what a law would it be? And how much of the law of God should be repealed? If sinners might make a scripture, you should find in it no such passages as these—*except a man be converted, or born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven: without holiness none shall see God. If self might make laws, you should not read in them if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if by the spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live; nor should you there find, that the gate is strait, and*

the way is narrow that leads to life, and few there be that find it ; or that the righteous are scarcely saved.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 348.

CHAP. II.—*Essential Doctrines.*

THROUGH the whole course of our ministry, we must insist most upon the greatest, and most certain and necessary things, and be more seldom and sparing upon the rest. If we can but teach Christ to our people, we teach them all. Get them well to heaven, and they will have knowledge enough. The great and commonly acknowledged truths are they that men must live upon, and which are the great instruments of raising the heart to God, and destroying men's sins. And therefore we must still have our people's NECESSITIES in our eyes.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 358.

It is not unlikely that some of those wits that are taken more with things new, than with things necessary, will marvel that I chose so common a subject, and tell me that they all know this already. But I do it purposely upon these following considerations. 1. Because I well know, that it is these common truths that are the great and necessary things, which men's everlasting happiness or misery doth most depend upon. You may be ignorant of many controversies and inferior points, without the danger of your souls, but so you cannot of these fundamentals. 2. Because it's apparent by the lives of men, that few know these common truths savingly that think they know them. 3. Because there are several degrees of knowing the same truths, and the best are imperfect in degree,

the principal growth in knowledge that we should look after, is not to know *more* matters than we knew before, but to know *that better*, and with a clearer light and firmer apprehension, which we darkly and slightly knew before. You may more safely be without *any* knowledge at all of any lower truths, than without *some further degree* of the knowledge of those which you already know. 4. Besides, it is known by sad experience, that many perish who know the truth, for want of the consideration of it, and making use of what they know, and so their knowledge doth but condemn them. We have as much need therefore to teach and help you to get these truths which you know, into your hearts and lives, as to tell you more. 5. And, indeed it is the impression of these great and master truths, that are the very instruments of the great works that are to be done upon the heart by the spirit and ourselves. In the right use of these it is that the principal part of the skill and holy wisdom of a christian doth consist; and in the diligent and constant use of these lieth the life and trade of christianity. There is something amiss in men's hearts or lives, but it is for want of sound knowing and believing, or well-using these fundamentals.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 769.

I must tell you, that it was these essentials of christianity that were the instrumental causes of your first conversion, and were more needful and useful to you then, than ten thousand others; so it is the very same points that you must always live upon, and the confirmation and growth of your souls in these, will be more useful to you than the adding ten thousand truths more, which yet you know not: and therefore take this advice, as you love your peace and growth; neglect not to

know more, but bestow many and many hours in labouring to know better, the great truths which you have received, for one hour that you bestow in seeking to know more truths which you know not, believe it, this is the safe and thriving way. You know already that God is all sufficient, and infinitely wise and good and powerful: and you know not perhaps the nature of free will, or of God's decrees of election and reprobation, or a hundred the like points. True knowledge of any of the revealed things of God is very desirable: but yet, I must tell you, that you are forty times more defective here in your knowledge of that God which you do know, than of the other which you know not; that is, the want of more degrees of this necessary knowledge, is more dangerous to your souls than the total want of the less necessary knowledge. And the addition of more degrees to the more needful parts of knowledge, will strengthen and enrich you more than the knowing of less necessary things, which you knew not before at all. You know Christ crucified already; but perhaps you know not certain controversies about church government, or the definitions and distinctions of many matters in divinity: it will be a greater growth now to your knowledge, to know a little more of Christ crucified, whom you know already, than to know these lesser matters, which you know not yet at all. If you had already a hundred pounds in gold, and not a penny worth in silver, it would more enrich you to have another purse full of gold, than a purse full of silver. Trading in richer commodities is liker to raise men to greater estates, than trading for matters of a smaller rate. They that go to the Indies for gold and pearl, may be rich if they get but little in quantity; when he may be poor that brings home ships laded with the

greatest store of a poor commodity. That man that hath a double measure of the knowledge of God in Christ, and the clearest and deepest, and most effectual apprehensions of the riches of grace and glory to come, and yet never heard of most of the questions in Scotus, or Ockam, or Aquinas, is far richer in knowledge, and a much wiser man, than he that hath those controversies at his fingers' ends, and yet have not half his clearness and solidity of the knowledge of God and Christ, of grace and glory. There is enough in some one of the articles of your faith, in one of God's attributes, in one of Christ's benefits, in one of the spirit's graces, to hold you study all your lives, and to afford you still an increase of knowledge. To know God the Father, Son, and Spirit, and their revelations to you, and operations for you, and your duties to them, and the way of communion with them, is that knowledge in which you must still be growing, till it be perfected by the celestial beatifical vision. Those are not the wisest men that can answer most questions; but those that have the fullest intellectual reception of the infinite wisdom. You will confess that he is a wiser man that hath wisdom to get and rule a kingdom, than he that hath wit enough to talk of a hundred trivial matters, which the other is ignorant of. That's the wisest physician that can do most to save men's lives; and not he that can read a lecture of anatomy, or is readiest in the terms of his art. Knowledge is to be esteemed according to the use of it, and the dignity of its object, and not according to the number and subtilty of notions. And therefore I beseech you all, that are young and weak in faith, take much more pains to grow in the fuller acquaintance with the same faith you have received than to be acquainted with the smaller controver-

sial truths which you never knew. Men use to call these higher points, because they are more difficult; but certainly the articles of your faith are much higher in point of excellency, though they are lower in the due order of learning them, as the foundation is the lowest part of the building, and is first laid, but is that which must bear up all the rest. And here you must observe, how gracelessly and unlike to christians those men speak, that say, they care not for reading such a book, or hearing such and such a minister, because he tells them no more than they knew already, and on that account some of them stay away from church, because they hear nothing but what they knew already. It is a certain sign that they do not know already the nature of God, and the riches of Christ, which they say they know; for if they did, they could not hear or think too much of them: they would long to know more, and therefore hear more of the same things. It's a sign that the ministers take the course that tends to your edification and enriching in knowledge, when he is most upon the great and most necessary truths. All saints do make it their constant study to comprehend the height and breadth, and length, and depth, and know the love of God in Christ: but when they have done, they confess that it passeth knowledge (*Eph. iii. 17, 18, 19*): It's a graceless wicked soul, in a state of damnation, that conceits he knows so much of God and Jesus Christ, and the essentials of christianity, that he cares not for hearing these things any more, but had rather hear novelties, and let these alone; and feeleth not any need of knowing much more, and more of the same truths; and of using and living upon these vital principles which he knows. You have eaten bread, and drank beer an hundred times; but perhaps you

never did eat of sturgeon or whale, of a bear or a leopard, of chesnuts or pignuts, or many strange or dangerous fruits in all your life. And yet I hope you will not seek after these because they are novelties, and give over eating bread, because you have eaten of it already. Nor will you churlishly refuse to go to a feast, because there is no meat but what you have eaten of before. We have not a new God to preach to you, nor a new Christ, nor a new spirit, nor a new gospel, nor a new church, nor a new faith, nor a new baptismal covenant, nor a new heaven, or hope or happiness to propound (*Gal. i. 9, 10; Eph. iv. 3, 4, 5*). Your growth in methods, and definitions, and distinctions, and in additional points of knowledge, is principally to be valued as it cleareth your understandings in the foresaid great essential points, and brings you up to God himself. Some wretches think they have quickly learned past the essential articles of the faith, and, ere long, they are past the higher points; and shortly they are past the scripture itself, and throw it by, as a scholar that has learnt one book, and must be entered into another. They understand not, that the ministry and spirit are but to teach them the word of the gospel; but they think they must outgrow the word and ministry, and the spirit must teach them some other doctrine, or gospel, which the written word doth not contain. I pray mark the Apostle's warning, *Heb. xiii. 9*, Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be established in grace; and *Eph. iv. 14*, That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 953.

CHAP. III.—*Christianity a Religion of Motives.*

THE first thing that God looks at, is what you would do, and the next is, what you do. If you do it, but had rather leave it undone, you lose your reward, and God will take it, as if you had not done it: for it was not you that did it, if you did it not from love; but it was fear that dwelleth in you. God takes men's hearty desires and will, instead of the deed, where they have not power to fulfil it; but he never took the bare deed instead of the will. A blockish kind of worship, consisting in outward actions, without the heart, is fit to be given to a wooden god, a senseless idol; but the true and living God abhors it. He is a spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and in truth; such worshippers he seeketh, and such only will he accept (*Joh. iv. 23, 24*). A beggar will be glad of your alms, though you give it with an ill-will, because he needeth it; but God hath no need of you, nor of your service, and therefore think not that he will accept you on such terms. That people worship God in vain, that draw near him with their mouths, and honour him with their lips, when their heart is far from him. (*Matt. xv. 8, 9*). A man's heart is where his love is, rather than where his fear is. If you should lie still upon your knees, or in the holy assembly; if you should be the strictest observer of the ordinances on the Lord's days, and yet had such hearts in you, as had rather let all these alone, if it were not for fear of punishment; it will all be disregarded, and reckoned to you according to your wills, as if you had never done it at all. It's love that must win love, or make you fit for love to entertain. If you

give your goods to the poor, or your bodies to be burned, in a cause that is in itself good, and yet have not love, it availeth nothing, (1 *Corr.* xiii. 1, 2, 3, 5). You will not think your wife had conjugal affection that loveth another man better than you, and had rather be gone from you, if she could live without you. It's an unnatural son that loves not his father, but had rather be from him than with him.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 590.

CHAP. IV.—*Salvation offered to all.*

IT is the most astonishing part of all God's providence to me, that he so far forsaketh almost all the world, and confineth his special favour to so few; that so small a part of the world hath the profession of christianity, in comparison of heathen, Mahometans, and other infidels! and that among professed christians, there are so few that are saved from gross delusions, and have but any competent knowledge: and that among *those* there are so few that are seriously religious, and truly set their hearts on heaven.—*Life and Time*, p. 131.

All our enemies in hell, or earth, cannot make us miserable without ourselves; nor keep a sinner from true conversion and salvation, if he do it not himself; no, nor compel him to one sinful thought, or word, or deed, or omission, but tempting and enticing him to be willing: all that are graceless, are wilfully graceless. None go to hell, but those that choose the way to hell, and would not be persuaded out of it: none miss of heaven, but those that did set so light by it, and refused the holy way that leadeth to it.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 21.

God, who in himself is infinitely good, in his infinite wisdom seeth it best to make his creatures in great variety, and not to communicate the same degrees of excellency to them all: as you see that every star is not a sun, nor all stars equal, nor the clouds like the stars, nor the earth and water so pure as the air, nor so active as the fire; as you see a difference between men and beasts, and birds and worms, and trees, plants, and stones in wonderful variety: and it is folly to accuse God for not making every worm a man, or every man an angel, or every stone a star or sun: because he is a free creator and benefactor, and may make or not make, give or not give, as he pleaseth, and knoweth well why he doth what he doth, which we poor worms are unfit to know.

Even so some reasonable creatures he hath made so glorious in holiness and perfection, that they cannot sin, that is, they never will sin; I mean the angels: and some he hath made such as may please him, and be happy if they will (assisting them by abundance of instructions and mercies, and afflictions); and yet (*Prov. i. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, &c.*) may sin and perish if they will not be persuaded. And among these, even mortal men, he freely giveth more mercy to some than he doth to others: but to all so much as that nothing can undo them, if they do not wilfully, obstinately, and impenitently refuse, and abuse the mercy which is given and offered them even to the last.

Now it is true, that God could make every man an angel, and every wicked man a saint: and all those to whom he hath left a possibility either to stand or fall, as themselves shall choose, he could have made such, as that to sin should have been impossible to them. But it pleased him to do otherwise, and he well knoweth why.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 188.

God did at first make a perfect law, which (*Rom. iii. 21*, &c. and v. throughout) forbid all sin on pain of death; and man did break this law, and we all still break it from day to day by every sin; and God being merciful, hath given us a Saviour, and by him the forgiveness of all our sins: but how? not absolutely: but he pardoneth us all by an act of oblivion, a pardoning law; and this law maketh our *faith* and *true repentance* (or *conversion*) to be the condition of pardon. And in it God affirmeth and protesteth, that he will pardon and save (*Mark, xvi. 16*; *John, iii. 16, 18, 19*; *2 Thes. ii. 7, 8, 9, 10*; *Heb. ii. 3, 4*; *Heb. iv. 1*, and *Heb. xii. 27, 28, 29*) all that believe and are converted: and he will never pardon or save them that continue unconverted in their sin and unbelief. God hath already given out a pardon to all the world, if they will but take it thankfully on his terms, and cease their rebellion and turn to him; and hath resolved that they that continue to refuse this pardon and mercy, shall be doubly punished, first for their common sins, and then for their base unthankfulness and contempt of mercy. And now bethink you whether it be not foolishness, for any to say, I hope *God will forgive me*, and be *better than* his word? He hath *already* forgiven you, if you repent and turn to him; but if you will not, it is impudence for a man at the same time to *refuse forgiveness* and yet to *hope* for it, to despise mercy, and say I hope for mercy.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 150.

If your trouble be about your *sins*, or want of grace, and spiritual state, digest well the following truths and counsels, and it will cure you:

1. God's goodness is equal to his greatness; even to that power that ruleth heaven and earth. His

attributes are commensurate ; and goodness will do good to capable receivers. He loved us when we were enemies, and he is essentially love itself.

II. Christ hath freely taken human nature, and made satisfaction for the sins of the world, as full as answereth his ends, and so full, that none shall perish for want of sufficiency in his sacrifice and merits.

III. Upon these merits Christ hath made a law, or covenant of grace, forgiving all sin, and giving freely everlasting life to all that will believingly accept it; so that all men's sins are conditionally pardoned by the tenor of this covenant.

IV. The condition of pardon and life is not that we sin no more, or that by any price we purchase it of God, or by our own works do benefit him, or by his grace ; but only that we believe him, and willingly accept of the mercy which he freely giveth us, according to the nature of the gift, that is, that we accept of Christ as Christ, to justify, sanctify, rule, and save us.

V. God hath commissioned his ministers to proclaim and offer this covenant and grace to all, and earnestly intreat them in his name to accept it, and be reconciled to him ; he hath excepted none.

VI. No man that hath this offer is damned, but only those that obstinately refuse it to the last breath.

VII. The day of grace is never so past to any sinner, but still he may have Christ and pardon if he will ; and if he have it not, it is because he will not. And the day of grace is so far from being past, that it is savingly come to all that are so willing ; and grace is still offered urgently to all.

VIII. The *will* is the *man* in God's account, and what a man truly would be and have, he is, and shall have: consent to the baptismal covenant is

true grace and conversion, and such have right to Christ and life.

IX. The number and greatness of former sin, is no exception against the pardon of any penitent converted sinner: God pardoneth great and small to such; where sin aboundeth, grace superaboundeth, and much is forgiven, that men may be thankful, and love much.

X. Repentance is true, though tears and passionate sorrow be defective, when a man had rather leave his sin than keep it, and sincerely, though imperfectly endeavoureth fully to overcome it. No sin shall damn a man which he more hateth than loveth, and had truly rather leave than keep, and sheweth this by true endeavour.

XI. The best man hath much evil, and the worst have some good; but it is that which is preferred, and predominant in the will, which differenceth the godly and the wicked. He that in estimation, choice and life, preferreth God, and heaven and holiness, before the world, and the pleasure of sin, is a truly godly man, and shall be saved.

XII. The best have daily need of pardon, even for the faultiness of their holiest duties, and must daily live on Christ for pardon.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 841.

If all free agents have abused their liberty and undone themselves; if God so far shew mercy to them all, as that they may all be happy if they will, and none of them shall perish but for wilful and final refusing the saving means and mercy which is offered to them; and if they will, they may live with God himself, and Christ and angels in endless glory; and none shall lose this free given felicity, but for final refusal and contempt, prefer-

ring certain vanity and dung before it.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 925.

My censures of the papists do much differ from what they were at first; I then thought that their errors in the *doctrines of faith* were their most dangerous mistakes, as in the points of merit, justification by works, assurance of salvation, the nature of faith, &c.; but now I am assured that their mis-expressions, and misunderstanding us, with our mistakings of them, and inconvenient expressing our own opinions, hath made the difference in these points to appear much greater than they are; and that in some of them, it is next to none at all. But the great and unreconcilable differences lie in their church tyranny and usurpations, and in their corruptions and abasement of God's worship, together with their befriending of *ignorance* and *vice*. At first I thought that Mr. *Perkins* well proved that a papist cannot go beyond a reprobate; but now I doubt not but that God hath many sanctified ones among them, who have received the true doctrine of christianity so practically, that their contradictory errors prevail not against them, to hinder their love of God and their salvation; but that their errors are like to a conquerable dose of poison, which nature doth overcome. And I can never believe, that a man may not be saved by that religion which doth but bring him to the true love of God, and to a heavenly mind and life; nor that God will ever cast a soul into hell that truly loveth him.—*Life*, p. 131.

CHAP. V.—*Salvation of Heathens.*

No part of my prayers are so deeply serious, as that for the conversion of the infidel and ungodly world, that God's name may be sanctified, and his kingdom come, and his will be done on earth as it is in Heaven; nor was I ever before so sensible what a plague the division of languages was, which hindereth our speaking to them for their conversion; nor what a *great sin tyranny* is, which keepeth out the gospel from most of the nations of the world. Could we but go among Tartarians, Turks, and Heathens, and speak their language, I should be but little troubled for the silencing of eighteen hundred ministers at once in *England*, nor for all the rest that were cast out here, and in *Scotland* and *Ireland*; there being no employment in the world so desirable in my eyes, as to labour for the winning of such miserable souls; which maketh me greatly honour Mr. *John Eliot*, the apostle of the Indians in *New England*, and whoever else have laboured in such a work.—*Life and Time*, p. 131.

Heathens and infidels are not less unredeemed under the remediless curse and covenant of innocence, which we broke in Adam, but are all brought by the redemption wrought by Christ, under a law or terms of grace. 1. God made a covenant of grace with all mankind in Adam, (*Gen. iii. 15*), who was, by tradition, to acquaint his posterity with it, as he did to Cain and Abel, the ordinance of oblation and sacrifice. 2. This covenant was renewed with all mankind in Noah. 3. This covenant is not repealed, otherwise than by a perfect edition to them that have the plenary gospel. 4. The full gospel covenant is made for

all, as to the tenor of it, and the command of preaching and offering it to all. 5. They that have not this edition, may yet be under the first edition. The Jews were under the first edition, and were saved without believing in the determinate person of Jesus, or that he should die for sin, and rise again, and send down the spirit; for the Apostles believed it not before-hand, (*Luke*, xviii. 34; *Joh.* xii. 16; *Luke*, ix. 45; *Mark*, ix. 34; *Luke*, xxiv. 21, 25, 26; *Acts*, i. 6, 7, 8). Yet were they then in a state of saving grace, as appeareth by *John* xiv. and xv. and xvi. and xvii. throughout. 7. The rest of the world that had not the same supernatural revelation, were not then bound to believe so much as the Jews were about the Messiah. 8. God himself told them all, that they were not under the unremedied curse of the covenant of innocency, by giving them a life full of those mercies which they had forfeited, which all tended to lead them to repentance, and to seek after God, (*Rom.* ii. 4; *Acts*, xvii. 27), and find him; yea, he left not himself without witness, for that which may be known of him, and his invisible things, are clearly seen and manifested in his works, so that the wicked are without excuse (*Rom.* i. 19, 20; *Acts*, xiv. 17); so that all heathens are bound to believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him, (*Heb.* xi. 6), and are all under the duty of using certain means, in order to their recovery and salvation, and to believe that they are not commanded to do this in vain; so that God's own providence, by a course of such mercies, which cannot stand with the execution of the unremedied violated law of innocency, together with his obliging all men to repentance, and to the use of a certain course of means, in order to their salvation, is a promulgation of a law of grace, ac-

cording to the first edition, and distinguishes man from unredeemed devils. 9. Of a truth, God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that fears God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him, (*Acts*, x. 34, 35). For God will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuing in well doing, seek for glory and honour, and incorruptibility, eternal life, (*Rom.* ii. 6, 7), glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek, (verse 10), for there is no respect of persons with God, (verse 11); for when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of a law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts also at the same time accusing or excusing one another, (ver. 14, 15); and they shall be judged according to that law which they were under (natural or Mosaical) even by Jesus Christ, (verse 12, 16); and it is the work of the spirit promised to believers to write the law of God in their hearts. It is enough for us therefore to know, that the visible church hath manifold privileges above all others, (*Rom.* iii. 1, 2, 3, &c.); and that salvation is more easy, sure, and plenteous, where the gospel cometh, than with any others, and that we have therefore cause to rejoice with thankfulness for our lot.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 928.

CHAP. VI.—Of Nominal Christians.

THE religion that is but delusory and vain, may be accompanied with much alms, and works of

seeming justice and charity, (*Matt.* vi. 1, 2; *Luke*, xviii, 11, 12). He may have many virtues called moral, and be a man of much esteem with others, even with the best and wisest, for his seeming wisdom, and piety, and justice: he may be no extortioner, unjust, adulterer, but as to gross sins seem blameless, (*Luke*, xviii, 11, 12; *Psal.* iii. 6), and be much in reproaching the scandalous lives of others, and thank God that he is none such, (*Luke*, xviii. 11).—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 448.

He that hath but a *vain religion*, may in his judgment approve of saving grace, and like the more zealous, upright, self-denying, heavenly lives of others, and wish that he might die their death, and wish himself as happy as they, so it might be had on his own terms; and he may have some counterfeit of every grace, and think that it is true, (*Numb.* xxiii, 10; *Jam.* ii. 14, and *1 Cor.* xiii. 1, 2, 3; *Mark*, vi. 20.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 448.

None will be more forward to call another *hypocrite*, than the *hypocrite*, nor to extol sincerity and uprightness of heart and life. And thus you see what vain religion is made up with.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 448.

CHAP. VII.—*Instruction in Christianity.*

IGNORANT hearers cannot receive much in few words, but must have a little matter in many words oft and oft repeated, that their wits may have leisure to work upon it.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 196.

CHAP. VIII.—*Blessing of Christianity in the Great and Wealthy.*

HONOUR those ever with a double honour, that are great and godly, rich and religious; not because they are rich, but because they are so strong and excellent in grace, as to overcome such great temptations: and to be heavenly in the midst of earthly plenty, and to be faithful stewards of so much. Religious faithful princes and magistrates cannot easily be valued and honoured too much. What wonders are they in the most part of the earth! what a blessing to the people that are ruled by them! were they not strong in faith, they could not stand fast in such a stormy place. Where is there in the world a more lively resemblance of God, than a holy prince or governor, that liveth no more to the flesh than the poorest, for all his abundance of fleshly accommodations, and that devoteth and improveth all his power and honour and interest, to the promoting of holiness, love, and concord.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 478.

BOOK III.

REMEDY FOR THE DISORDERED STATE OF MAN.—
· JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE.

CHAP. I.—*Of Faith.*

THE christian faith which is required at baptism, and then professed, and hath the promise of justification and glorification as a true belief of the gospel, and an acceptance, and consent unto the covenant of grace, is, a believing that God is our creator, our ruler, and our chief good; and that Jesus Christ is God and man, our saviour, our ransom, our teacher and our king: and that the Holy Ghost is the sanctifier of the church of Christ: and it is an understanding, serious consent, that this God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be my God, and reconciled Father in Christ, my saviour and my sanctifier; to justify me, sanctify me, and glorify me, in the perfect knowledge of God, and mutual complacence in heaven: which belief and consent wrought in me by the word and spirit of Christ, is grounded upon the veracity of God as the chief revealer, and upon his love and mercy as the donor; and upon Christ and his Apostles as the messengers of God; and upon the gospel, and specially the covenant of grace, as the instrumental revelation and dona-

tion itself: and upon the many signal operations of the Holy Ghost, as the divine infallible attestation of their truth.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 556.

CHAP. II.—*Objects of Faith.*

REMEMBER that God and Heaven, the unseen things, are the final object of true faith; and that the final object is the noblest; and that the principal use of faith, is to carry up the whole heart and life from things visible and temporal, to things invisible and eternal; and not merely to comfort us in the assurance of our own forgiveness and salvation.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 554.

CHAP. III.—*Means of Faith.*

TRUST not only to your understandings, and think not that study is all which is necessary to faith: but remember that faith is the gift of God, and therefore pray as well as study. (*Prov.* iii. 5). *Trust in the Lord, with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own understanding.* It is a precept as necessary in this point as in any. In all things God abhorreth the *proud*, and looketh at them *afar off*, as with disowning and disdain: but in no case more, than when a blind ungodly sinner shall so overvalue his own understanding, as to think if there be evidence of truth in the mystery of faith, he is able presently to discern it, before or without any heavenly illumination, to cure his dark distempered mind. Remember, that as the sun is seen

only by his own light, so is God our creator and redeemer. Faith is the gift of God, as well as repentance; (*Eph. ii. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26*). Apply yourselves therefore to God by earnest prayer for it. As he (*Mark, ix. 24*): Lord, *I believe; help thou my unbelief*. And as the disciples (*Luke, xvii. 5*), *increase our faith*. A humble soul, that waiteth on God in fervent prayer, and neglecteth not to study and search for truth, is much liker to become a confirmed believer, than ungodly students, who trust and seek no further than to their books, and their perverted minds. For as God will be sought to for his grace; so those that *draw near him*, do draw near unto the *light*; and therefore are like as children of light, to be delivered from the power of darkness: for in his light we shall see the light that must acquaint us with him.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 553.

There are certain things which I would especially advise you to, against *temptations* to unbelief. *Enter not into the debate of so great a business when you are incapable of it*: especially when your minds are taken up with worldly business, or other thoughts have carried them away, let not Satan then surprise you, and say, Come now and question thy religion: you could not resolve a question in philosophy, nor cast up any long account, on such a sudden, with an unprepared mind. When the evidences of your faith are out of mind, stay till you can have leisure to set yourselves to the business with that studiousness, and those helps, which so great a matter doth require.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 551.

CHAP. IV.—*Saving Faith.*

'THOUSANDS of poor souls have been in the dark, and unable to see themselves to be believers, merely for want of knowing what saving faith is.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 853.

Faith entereth at the understanding; but it hath not all its essential parts, and is not the gospel faith indeed, till it hath possessed the will. The heart of faith is wanting, till faith hath taken possession of the heart. For by faith Christ dwelleth in the heart (*Eph.* iii. 17). And if he dwells not in the heart, he dwells not in the man, in a saving way. It is in the heart that the word must have its rooting, or else it will wither in time of trial. It is seeking with the whole heart that is the evidence of the blessed (*Psal.* cxix. 2). And it is a feigned turning when men turn not to God with the whole heart (*Jer.* iii. 10). This is God's promise concerning the elect; I will give them a heart to know me that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart (*Jer.* xxiv. 7). See then that the heart be unfeignedly delivered up to Christ; for if Christ have it not, the flesh, the world, and the devil will have it. Your heart must be a dwelling for one of these masters, chuse you which.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 579.

Be sure to fix this truth deep in your mind, that justifying faith is not an assurance of our justification; no, nor a persuasion or belief that we are justified or pardoned, or that Christ died more for

us than for others. Nor yet is affiance or resting on Christ the vital, principal, certain, constant full act, but it is the understandings, belief of the truth of the gospel, and the will's acceptance of Christ, and life offered to us therein; which acceptance is but the hearty consent, or willingness that he be yours, and you his. This is the faith which must justify and save you.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 854.

Wicked men are willing to have remission, justification, and freedom from hell (for no man can be willing to be unpardoned and be damned); but they are not willing to have Christ himself in that nature and office which he must be accepted; that is, as an holy head and husband, to save them both from the guilt and power, and all defilement and abode of sin, and to rule them by his law, and guide them by his spirit, and to make them happy by bringing them to God, that being without sin, they may be perfectly pleasing and amiable in his sight, and enjoy him for ever. Thus is Christ offered, and thus to be accepted of all that will be saved; and thus no wicked man will accept him (but when he ceaseth to be wicked). To cut all the rest short in a word, I say, that in this fore described willingness or acceptance, repentance, love, thankfulness, resolution to obey, are all contained, or nearly implied; so that the heart of saving faith, is this acceptance of Christ, or willingness to have him to justify, sanctify, guide and govern you. Find but this willingness, and you find all the rest, whether you expressly see them or not.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 854.

True faith is a jewel, rare and *precious*, and not so common as nominal careless christians think.

What say they, *are we not all believers; will you make infidels of all that are not saints? Are none christians, but those that live so strictly?* Answer, I know they are not *infidels* by *profession*; but what they are indeed, and what God will take them for, you may soon perceive, by comparing the description of faith with the inscription legible on their *lives*.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 518.

CHAP. V.—*Effects of Faith.*

Do we not say that such a divine revelation is as sure, as if the things were in themselves laid open to our sight? Why then are we no more affected with them? Why are we no more transported by them? Why do they no more command our souls, and stir up our faculties to the most vigorous and lively exercise, and call them off from things that are not to us considerable?—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 518.

CHAP. VI.—*Life of Faith.*

It is not living ordinarily by *sense*, and looking when God will cast in the light of faith extraordinarily, which is indeed the life of faith: nor is it seeming to stir up faith in a prayer or sermon, and looking no more after it all the day: this is but to give God a salutation, and not to dwell and walk with him: and to give heaven a complimentary visit sometimes, but not to have your conversation there. (2 Cor. v. 7, 8).—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 553.

CHAP. VII.—*Support in Faith.*

WE must not be content to be once satisfied of the truth of the life to come; but we must mentally live upon it and for it, and know how great business our souls have every day with our glorified Lord, and the glorified society of angels, and the perfected spirits of the just: and with the blessed God of Love and Glory; we must daily fetch thence the motives of our desires, and hopes and duties, the incentives of our love and joy. The confutation of all temptations from the flesh and the world; and our supporting patience in all our sufferings and fears. Read oft *John* xvii. 22, 23, 24, and xx. 17; *Heb.* xii. 22, 23, 24; *Matt.* vi. 19, 20, 21, 33; *Col.* iii. 4, 5; *2 Thes.* i. 10, 11; *Heb.* xi.; *2 Cor.* iv. 16, 17, and v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; *Phil.* i. 21, 23, and iii. 18, 19, 20. They that thus live by faith on God and glory, will be prepared for a joyful death.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 143.

CHAP. VIII.—*Joy in Believing.*

IT glorifieth God by shewing the excellency of faith, *when we condemn the riches and honour of the world, and live above the worldling things, accounting that a despicable thing which he accounts his happiness, and loseth his soul for.* As men despise the toys of children, so a believer must take the transitory vanities of this world, for matters so inconsiderable, as not to be worthy his regard, save only as they are the matters of his duty to God, or as they relate to them or the world to come: saith

Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 18, "We look not at the things which are seen (they are not worth our observing or looking at), but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen, are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. The world is under a believer's feet, while his eye is fixed on the celestial world. He travelleth through it to his home."—*Works*, vol. i. p. 142.

1. *Rejoice that your names are written in heaven.* It's you, christians, that joy of right belongs to. Little know the *lovers of pleasure more than God*, that they lose a thousand-fold more pleasure than they win. And that by running from a holy life for pleasure, they run from the fire into the water for heat, and from the sun into a dungeon for light. O shew the unbelieving world by your rejoicing, how they are mistaken in their choice! Be ashamed that an empty sot, and one that must be for ever a firebrand in hell, should live a more joyful life than you! O do not so wrong your Lord, your faith, your endless joys, as to walk in heaviness, and cast away the joy of the Lord which is your strength, and to be still complaining, when those that are prepared for the slaughter are as frolick as if the bitterness of death were past. It's well that you have so much life as to feel your sicknesses; but it is not well, that because you are yet diseased, the life of grace and of glory should be so uneffectual to your comfort. And yet, alas! how common is it to see the most miserable frisk and flee, while the heirs of life are sinfully vexing themselves with the inordinate fears of death! Lift up thy head, christian, and remember whence came thy graces, even thy least desires, and whither do they tend! Where is thy father, and thy head, and the most of the dear companions?

Where is it that thou must live to all eternity? Doth it beseem a companion of angels, a member of Christ, a child of God, an heir of heaven, to be grieved at every petty cross, and to lay by all the sense of their felicity, because some trifle of the world falls cross to their desires and commodity? Is it seemly for one that must be everlastingly as full of joy, as the sun is full of light, to live in such a self-troubling, drooping state, as to disgrace religion, and frighten away the ungodly from the doors of grace, that by your joyful lives might be provoked to enter? I know as to your happiness, the matter is not comparatively great; because if mistakes, and the devil's malice, should keep you sad here a hundred years, yet heaven will wipe away all tears, and those joys will be long enough when they come; and as the joy of the ungodly, so the sorrows of the humble, upright soul, will be but for a moment: and though you weep and lament when the world rejoiceth, as their joy shall be turned into sorrow, so your sorrow shall be turned into joy, and your joy shall no man take from you. But in the mean time, is it not shame and pity that you should live so unanswerable to the mercies of the Lord? That *you* should sinfully grieve the comforting spirit, by the wilful grieving of yourselves; and that you should peevishly cast away your precious mercies, when you so much need them, by reason of the troubles of a vexatious world, which you cannot avoid? That *you*, even *you* that are saved by the Lord, should still be questioning it, or unthankfully denying his great salvation, and so much hinder the salvation of others? For the Lord's sake, christians, and for your soul's sake, and in pity to the ungodly, yield not to the tempter that would trouble you when he cannot damn you? Is God your

father, and Christ your saviour, and the spirit your sanctifier, and heaven your home? And will you make all (for the present) as nothing to you, by a causeless obstinate denial? If you are in doubt, let not mere passionate *fears* be heard; and let not the devil, the enemy of your peace, be heard; but peruse your evidences, and still remember as the sum of all, that *the will is the man; and what you would be, that you are, before the Lord.*

And look not for more, as necessary to your comforts, than God hath made necessary. Is it nothing to have a *title to eternal life*, unless you be also as *holy as you desire*? Yea, is it nothing to have a *desire* to be more holy? Will you have *no comfort* as long as you have *distractions*, or *dullness*, or such like imperfection in duty? And till you have no disease of soul to trouble you, that is, till you have laid by flesh, and arrived at your perfect joy? Dare not to disobey the voice of God, (*Psal. xxxii. 11*). *Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart, (1 Thess. v. 16).* *Rejoice evermore.* Let it be something that *heaven* cannot weigh down, that shall suppress thy joy. Art thou in poverty? And is not heaven sufficient riches? Art thou in disgrace? And shalt thou not have honour enough in heaven? Art thou in danger from the injustice or the wrath of man? And is he not Almighty that hath undertaken to justify thee? (*Rom. viii. 33, 34*). Dost thou languish under pining sicknesses? And is there not everlasting health in heaven? Art thou weak in knowledge, in memory, in grace, in duty; troubled with uncommanded thoughts and passions? And was it not so on earth with all that are now in heaven? O christians, make conscience of obeying this command; *rejoice that your names are written in hea-*

ven. Did you but know how God approveth such rejoicing, and how much it pleaseth him above your pining sorrows; and how it strengtheneth the soul, and sweeteneth duty, and easeth suffering, and honoureth religion, and encourageth others, and how suitable it is to gospel grace, and to your high relations and ends, and how much better it serves to subdue the very sins that trouble you, than your fruitless, self-weakening complainings do; I say, did you well consider all these things, it would sure revive your drooping spirits.

And do not say now, *I would rejoice if I were sure that my name were written in heaven; but I am not sure.* For 1. *How is it that you are not sure? You may be sure that he that valueth and seeketh heaven as better than earth, and that loveth the holy way to heaven, and the most heavenly people, is indeed an heir of heaven; and you may be sure, if you will, that this is your own case: and yet you say you are not sure that your names are written in heaven.* If God give you his grace, and you deny it, will you therefore deny your right to glory, and make one sin the excuse for another?

2. And if you are not sure, is it nothing to have your probabilities and hopes, and the judgment of your able, faithful pastors, that your souls are in a safe condition? We dare not say so to the careless world, nor to the most of men, as we do to you.

Especially take heed lest melancholy habituate you to fears and griefs; and then religion must bear the blame, and you undergo a calamitous life, though you are the heirs of heaven. To this end, 1. Use not musing serious thoughts beyond the strength of your brain and intellect. 2. Place not too much of your religion in perusals and study of your hearts: but (for such as are inclined to me-

lancholy) it is the fruitfullest way to be much in expending duties abroad, and labouring to do good to others: such duties have less of self, and as much of God, and divert the troubling melancholy thoughts, and bring in more comfort by way of reward, than is usually got by more direct enquiring after comfort. 3. Use not too much solitariness and retiredness: man is a sociable creature: and as his duty lyeth much with others, so his comfort lyeth in the same way as his duty. 4. Take heed of worldly sorrows, and therefore of overvaluing worldly things. 5. Take heed of idleness, or of thinking that the duty of holiness is all that you have to mind; but make conscience of being diligent in a particular calling, which diverts the hurtful troubling thoughts, and is pleasing unto God. 6. Take not every sickness of your souls for death, but rejoice in that life which enableth you to be troubled at your diseases. Keep under melancholy by these means, (and the advice of the physician), and you will escape a very great hindrance to this high and holy duty of *heavenly rejoicing*.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 815.

CHAP. IX.—*Assurance*.

It is no easy matter to get *assurance* that God is reconciled to you, and that he hath forgiven all your sins.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 717.

Certainty of our faith and sincerity, is not necessary to salvation, but the sincerity of faith itself is necessary. He shall be saved that giveth up himself to Christ, though he know not that he is

sincere in doing it. Christ knoweth his own grace, when they that have it know not that it is sound. It is but few true christians that attain to certainty of salvation; for weak grace clogged with much corruption, is hardly known, and usually joined with fear and doubting.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 842.

But the scripture is so full and plain in assuring pardon and salvation to all true believers, that if you can but be sure you are a believer, you need not make any doubt of your interest in Christ, and your salvation.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 853.

Scripture shews, that certainty of salvation may be attained, and ought to be laboured for: when it tells us so frequently, that the saints before us have known their justification and future salvation: when it declares, that whosoever believeth in Christ shall not perish, but have everlasting life; which it would be in vain to declare, if we cannot know ourselves to be believers or not: when it make such a wide difference between the children of God, and the children of the devil: when it bids us give diligence to make our calling and election sure; and earnestly urges us to examine, prove, know our own selves, whether we be in the faith, and whether Jesus Christ be in us, except we be reprobates: always when its precepts require us to rejoice always, to call God our Father, to live in his praises, to love Christ's appearing, to wish that he may come quickly, and to comfort ourselves with the mention of it. But who can do any of these heartily, that is not in some measure sure that he is the child of God?—P. 145.

But the great hindrances are in men's own hearts. Some are so ignorant, that they know not what

self-examination is, nor what a minister means when he persuadeth them to try themselves: or they know not that there is any necessity for it; but think every man is bound to believe that his sins are pardoned, whether it be true or false, and that it is a great fault to make any question of it; or they do not think that assurance can be attained; or that there is any great difference between one man and another, but that we are all christians, and therefore need not trouble ourselves any farther: or at least they know not wherein the difference lies. They have as gross an idea of regeneration, as Nicodemus had. Some will not believe, that God will ever make such a difference between men in the life to come, and therefore will not search themselves whether they differ here. Some are so stupified, say what we can to them, they lay it not to heart, but give us the hearing, and there's an end. Some are so possessed with self-love and pride, that they will not so much as suspect they are in any danger. Like a proud tradesman, who scorns the prudent advice of casting up his books. As fond parents will not believe or hear any evil of their children. Some are so guilty, that they dare not try; and yet they dare venture on a more dreadful trial. Some are so in love with sin, and so dislike the way of God, that they dare not try their ways, lest they be forced from the course they love, to what they loath. Some are so resolved never to change their present state, that they neglect examination as an useless thing. Before they will seek a new way, when they have lived so long, and gone so far, they will put their eternal state to the venture, come of it what will. Many men are so busy in this world, that they cannot set themselves to the trying their title to heaven. Others are so clogged with slothfulness of

spirit, that they will not be at the pains of an hour's examination of their own hearts. But the most common and dangerous impediment is, that false faith and hope, commonly called presumption, which bears up the hearts of the greatest part of the world, and so keeps them from suspecting their danger.—P. 147.

The directions how to examine thyself are these: Empty thy mind of all other cares and thoughts, that they may not distract or divide thy mind. This work will be enough at once, without joining others with it. Then fall down before God in hearty prayer, desiring the assistance of his spirit, to discover to thee the plain truth of thy condition, and to enlighten thee in the whole progress of this work. Make choice of the most convenient time and place. Let the place be the most private; and the time, when you have nothing to interrupt you; and, if possible, let it be the present time. Have in readiness, either in memory or in writing, some scriptures, containing the descriptions of the saints, and the gospel terms of salvation; and convince thyself thoroughly of their infallible truth. Proceed then to put the question to thyself. Let it not be, whether there be any good in thee at all? Nor, whether thou hast such or such a degree and measure of grace? But, whether such or such a saving grace be in thee in sincerity or not? If thy heart draw back from the work, force it on. Lay thy command upon it. Let reason interpose and use its authority. Yea, lay the command of God upon it, and charge it to obey upon pain of his displeasure. Let conscience also do its office, till thy heart be excited to the work. Nor let thy heart trifle away the time, when it should be diligent at the work. Do as the psalmist, “my spirit made

diligent search." He that can prevail with his own heart, shall also prevail with God. If, after all thy pains, thou art not resolved, then seek out for help. Go to one that is godly, experienced, able, and faithful, and tell him thy case, and desire his best advice. Use the judgment of such an one, as that of a physician for thy body; though this can afford thee no full certainty, yet it may be a great help, and stay to direct thee. But don't make it a pretence to put off thyself from examination: only use it as one of the last remedies, when thy own endeavours will not serve. When thou hast discovered thy true state, pass sentence on thyself accordingly; either that thou art a true christian, or that thou art not. Pass not this sentence rashly, nor with self flattery, nor from melancholy terrors; but deliberately, truly, and according to thy conscience convinced by scripture and reason. Labour to get thy heart affected with it's condition, according to the sentence passed on it. If graceless, think of thy misery. If renewed and sanctified, think what a blessed state the Lord hath brought thee into. Pursue these thoughts, till they have left their impression on thy heart. Write this sentence at least in thy memory: "At such a time, upon thorough examination, I found my state to be thus, or thus." Such a record will be very useful to thee hereafter. Trust not to this one discovery, so as to try no more; nor let it hinder thee in the daily search of thy ways: neither be discouraged, if the trial must be often repeated. Especially take heed, if unregenerate, not to conclude of thy future state by the present. Don't say, "Because I am ungodly, I shall die so; because I am an hypocrite, I shall continue so." Don't despair: nothing but thy unwillingness can keep thee from Christ, though thou hast hitherto

abused him, and dissembled with him.—*Saint's Rest*, p. 145, 147, 157.

If a man should break through all hindrances, and set upon the duty of self-examination, yet assurance is not presently attained. Too many deceive themselves in their enquiries concerning it, through one or other of the following cases. There is such confusion and darkness in the soul of man, especially of an unregenerate man, that he can scarcely tell what he does, or what is in him. As in a house where nothing is in its proper place, it will be difficult to find what is wanted; so it is in the heart, where all things are in disorder. Most men accustom themselves to be strangers at home, and too little observe the temper and motions of their own hearts. Many are resolved what to judge before they try. Like a bribed judge, who examines as if he would judge uprightly, when he is previously resolved which way the cause shall go. Men are partial in their own cause; ready to think their great sins small, and their small sins none; their gifts of nature to be the work of grace, and to say, all these have I kept from my youth; I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing. Most men search but by the halves. If it will not easily and quickly be done, they are discouraged, and leave off. They try themselves by false marks and rules; not knowing wherein the truth of christianity doth consist; some looking beyond, and some short of the scripture standard. And frequently they miscarry in this work, by attempting it in their own strength. As some expect the spirit should do it without them, so others attempt it of themselves, without seeking or expecting the help of the spirit. Both these will certainly miscarry in their assurance.

Some other hindrances keep even true christians from comfortable certainty. As for instance, the weakness of grace. Small things are hardly discerned. Most christians content themselves with a small measure of grace, and do not follow on to spiritual strength and manhood. The chief remedy for such would be, to follow on their duty, till their graces be increased. Wait upon God in the use of the prescribed means, and he will undoubtedly bless you with increase. O that christians would bestow more of that time in getting more grace, which they bestow in anxious doubtings whether they have any or none; and lay out those serious affections, in praying for more grace, which they bestow in fruitless complaints!

I do not ask, whether thou be assured of salvation; nor whether thou canst believe that thy sins are pardoned, and that thou art beloved of God in Christ: These are no parts of justifying faith, but excellent fruits of it, and they that receive them, are comforted by them; but perhaps thou mayest never receive them whilst thou livest, and yet be a true heir of rest. Do not say then, "I cannot believe my sins are pardoned, or that I am in God's favour, and therefore I am no true believer." This is a most mistaken conclusion. The question is, whether thou dost heartily accept of Christ, that thou mayest be pardoned, reconciled to God, and so saved? Dost thou consent that he shall be thy Lord who hast bought thee, and that he shall bring thee to heaven in his own way? This is justifying, saving faith, and the mark by which thou must try thyself.—*Saint's Rest*, p. 149, 155, 159.

If your *heart be false*, it will be lying; but if it be not, it will not be lying, though you may be uncertain. The truth of your consent is one thing,

and your *certainty* of it is another: that it *be true*, is necessary to your salvation; but not that you be sure that it is true. But there is much difference between one that *truly consenteth* and resolveth, but is afraid lest his deceitful heart is not sincere in it. Because all that can be expected from us is, that *we speak our minds according to our best acquaintance with them*, otherwise we must forbear all *thanksgiving* for *special mercies*, and a great part of our worship of God, till we are certain of the sincerity of our own hearts, which too many are not.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 178.

The saints themselves being sanctified but in part, are but imperfectly assured of their salvation; and therefore in that measure, as they remain in doubt, or unassured, death may be a double terror to them. They believe the threatenings, and know more than unbelievers do, what an insufferable loss it is, to be deprived of the celestial glory! and what an unspeakable misery it is to bear the endless wrath of God: and therefore, so far as they have such fears, it must needs make death a terror to them.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 744.

It appeareth how little judgment is to be made of a man's condition by his melancholy apprehensions, or the sadness of his mind at death: and in what a different manner men of the same eminency in holiness and sincerity may go to God!—*Life and Time*, p. 431.

It much increased my peace, when God's providence called me to the comforting of many others that had the same complaints: while I answered their doubts, I answered my own; and the charity which I was constrained to exercise for them re-

dounded to myself, and insensibility abated my fears, and procured me an increase of quietness of mind.

And yet after all, I was glad of probabilities instead of full undoubted *certainties*; and to this very day, *anno* 1664, though I have no such degree of doubtfulness as is any great trouble to my soul, or procureth any great disquieting fears, yet cannot I say that I have such a certainty of my own sincerity in grace, as excludeth *all doubts and fears* of the contrary.—*Life and Time*, p. 9.

CHAP. X.—*Imperfection of Faith.*

MOST true believers are weak in faith. Alas! how far do we all fall short of the love, and zeal, and care, and diligence which we should have, if we had but *once beheld* the things which we do *believe*? Alas! how dead are our affections? How flat are our duties? How cold, and how slow are our endeavours? How unprofitable are our lives, in comparison of what *one hour's sight of heaven and hell* would make them be?—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 518.

A weak christian loveth God as one that is infinitely better than himself and all things, or else he did not love him at all as God. But in the exercise he is so much in minding himself, and so seldom and weak in the contemplation of God and his perfections, that he feeleth more of his love to himself than to God; and feeleth more of his love to God, as for the benefits which he receive in and by himself, than as for his own perfections; yea,

and often feeleth the love of himself to work more strongly than his love to the church, and all else in the world. The care of his own salvation is the highest principle which he ordinarily perceiveth in any great strength in him; and he is very little, and weakly carried out to the love of the whole church, and to the love of God above himself, (*Phil. ii. 20, 21, 22; 1 Cor. x. 24; Jer. xlv. 5*). — *Works*, vol. ii. p. 968.

The weak christian hath more love to God and holiness than to the world and fleshly pleasures; but yet his fear of punishment is greater than his love to God and holiness. To have no love to God, is inconsistent with a state of grace, and so it is to have less love to God than to the world, and less love to holiness than to sin; but to have more fear than love, is consistent with sincerity and grace; yea, the weak christian's love to God and holiness is joined with so much backwardness and averseness, and interrupted with weariness, and with carnal allurements and diversions of the creature, that he cannot perceive whether his love and willingness be sincere or not. He goeth on in a course of duty, but so heavily, that he scarce knows whether his love or loathing of it be the greater. He goeth to it as a sick man to his labour or meat: all that he doth is with so much pain or indisposedness, that to his feeling averseness seemeth greater than his willingness, were it not that necessity makes him willing. For the habitual love and complacency which he hath towards God and duty, is so oppressed by fear and averseness, that it is not so much felt in act as they. — *Works*, vol. ii. p. 968.

The weak christian is taken up but very little,

with the lively exercises of love and praise, nor with any studies higher than his own distempered heart: the care of his poor soul, and the complaining of his manifold infirmities and corruptions, is the most of his religion: and if he sets himself to the praising of God, or to thanksgivings, he is as dull and short in it, as if it was not his proper work, (*Psal.* lxxvii.; *Mark*, ix. 24; and xvi. 14.) — *Works*, vol. ii. p. 969.

The weak christian, though he hath no sin but what he is a hater of, and fain would be delivered from, yet alas, how imperfect is his deliverance? and how weak is the hatred of his sin, and mixed with so much proneness to it, that his life is much blemished with the spots of his offences. Though his unbelief and pride and worldliness, are not predominant in him, yet are they (or some of them) still so strong, and fight so much against his faith, humility, and heavenliness, than he can scarcely tell which hath the upper hand; nor can others that see the failings of his life, discern whether the good or evil be the most prevalent. Though it be heaven which he most seeketh, yet earth is so much regarded by him, that his heavenly mindedness is greatly suppressed and damped by it. And though it be the way of godliness and obedience which he walketh in, yet is it with so many stumblings and falls, if not deviations also, that maketh him oft a burthen to himself, a shame to his profession, and a snare or trouble to those about him. His heart is like an ill-swept house, that hath many a sluttish corner it; and his life is like a moth-eaten garment which hath many a hole, which you may see if you bring it to the light, (1 *Cor.* iii. 1, 2, 3; and vi. 6, 7, 8; and xi. 18, 21, 22, &c.) — *Works*, vol. ii. p. 970.

Consider that it is not a small, but an exceeding glory that is promised you in the gospel, and which you live in hope of possessing for ever; and therefore it should be an exceeding love that you should have to it, and an exceeding care that you should have of it. Make light of heaven, and make light of all; truly, it is an unsuitable, unreasonable thing, to have one low thought, or one careless word, or one cold prayer, or other performance about such a matter as eternal glory. Shall such a thing as heaven be coldly or carelessly minded and sought after? Shall the endless fruition of God in glory, be looked at with sleepy heartless wishes? I tell you, sirs, if you will have such high hopes, you must have high and strong endeavours!

Consider also, that it is not only low and smaller matters that you receive from God, but mercies innumerable, and inestimable and exceeding great; and therefore it is not cold affections and dull endeavours, that you should return to God for all these mercies. Mercy brought you into the world; and mercy hath nourished you and bred you up; and mercy hath defended and maintained you, and plentifully provided for you. Your bodies live upon it; your souls were recovered by it; it gave you your being; it rescued you from misery, it saved you from sin, and Satan, and yourselves: all that you have at the present you hold by it; all that you can hope for, for the future, must be from it: it is most sweet in quality; what can be sweeter to miserable souls than mercy?—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 945.

Overmuch sorrow would swallow up *faith* itself, and greatly hindereth its exercise. They are matters of unspeakable joy which the gospel calleth us to believe; and it is wonderful hard for a grieved

troubled soul to believe any thing that is matter of joy; much less of so great joy as pardon and salvation are. Though it dare not flatly give God the lie, it hardly believes his free and full promises, and the expressions of his readiness to receive all penitent returning sinners. Passionate grief serveth to *feel* somewhat contrary to the grace and promises of the gospel, and that feeling hinders faith.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 833.

This man's religion must needs be vain, who wants the life of faith itself, and heartily believeth not in Christ; he hath but an opinion of the truth of christianity, through the advantage of his education and company; and thereupon doth call himself a christian, and heartlessly talk of the mystery of redemption as a common thing: but he doth not, with a humble, broken heart, betake himself to Christ as his only refuge from the wrath of God, and everlasting misery, as he would lay hold on the hand of his friend, if he were drowning: the sense of the odiousness of sin, and of the damnation threatened by the righteous God, hath not yet taught him to value Christ, as he must be valued by such as will be saved by him. These hypocrites do but talk of Christ, and turn his name as they do their prayers, into the matter of a dry and customary form: they fly not to him as the only physician of their souls, in the feeling of their festering wounds; they cry not to him as the disciples in the tempest, *save, master, we perish*: they value him not practically (though notionally they do), as the pearl for which they must sell all, (*Matt.* xiii. 44, 45, 46). Christ doth not dwell in his heart by faith, nor doth he long with all the saints to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ

which passeth all knowledge, (*Eph. iii. 17, 18, 19*).—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 448.

CHAP. XI.—*Weak Faith.*

IF the fearful doubting soul shall say, I know it is a great comfort to them that are in Christ, but what is it to me, that know not whether I have any part in him? I answer, 1. The foundation of God still standeth sure; the Lord knoweth his own, even when some of them know not that they are his own. He knoweth his mark upon his sheep, when they know it not themselves. God doubteth not of his interest in thee, though thou doubt of thy interest in him; and thou art faster in the arms of his love, than by the arms of thy own faith; as the child is surer in the mother's arms, than by its holding of the mother. And moreover, your doubts and fears are part of the evil that shall be removed, and your bitterest sorrows that hence proceed, shall with the rest of the enemies be destroyed.

2. But yet take heed that you unthankfully plead not against the mercies which you have received, and be not friends to those doubts and fears which are your enemies, and that you take not part with the enemy of your comforts. Why dost thou doubt (poor humbled soul) of thy interest in Christ, that must make the conquest? Answer me but these few questions from thy heart.

1. Did Christ ever shew himself unkind to thee? Or unwilling to receive thee, and have mercy on thee? Did he ever give thee cause to think so poorly of his love and grace, as thy doubts do inti-

mate thou dost? Hast thou not found him kind when thou wast unkind? And that he thought on thee, when thou didst not think on him? And will he now forget thee, and end in wrath that begun in love? He desired thee when thou didst not desire him, and gave thee all thy desires after him; and will he now cross and deny the desires which he hath caused? He was found of thee (or rather found thee) when thou soughtest not after him; and can he reject thee, now thou criest and callest for his grace? O think not hardly of his wond'rous grace till he give thee cause. Let thy sweet experiences be remembered, to the shame of thy causeless doubts and fears; and let him that hath loved thee to the death, be thought on as he is, and not as the unbelieving flesh would misrepresent him.

2. If thou say that it is not his unkindness, but thy own, that feeds thy doubts, I further ask thee, is he not kind to the unkind, especially when they lament their unkindness? Thou art not so unkind to him as thou wast in thy *unconverted* state, and yet he then exprest his love in thy conversion: he then sought thee when thou wentest astray, and brought thee carefully home into his fold, and there he hath kept thee ever since; and is he less kind now when thou art returned home? Dost thou not know that all the children have their frowardness, and are guilty of unkindnesses to him? And yet he doth not therefore disown them, and turn them out of his family; but is tender of them in their froward weakness, because they are his own. How dealt he with the peevish prophet *Jonah*, that was *exceedingly displeased and very angry*, that God spared *Nineveh*, lest it should be a dishonour to his prophesy, insomuch that he wished that he might *die*, and *not live*; and after repined at the

withering of his gourd, and the scorching of the sun that beat upon him? The Lord doth gently question with him, *Dost thou well to be angry?* And after hence convince him, that the mercy which he valued to himself, he should not envy to so many, (*Jonah*, iv.) How dealt he with the Disciples that fell asleep, when they should have watched with Christ, in the night of his great agony? He doth not tell them, *You are none of mine, because they could not watch with me one hour*; but tenderly excuseth that which they durst not excuse themselves,—*the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*. When he was on the cross, though *they all forsook him and fled*; he was then so far from forsaking them, that he was manifesting to admiration that exceeding love that never would forsake them. And knowest thou not, poor complaining soul, that the kindness of Christ overcometh all the unkindness of his children? And that his blood and grace is sufficient to save thee from greater sins than those that trouble thee? If thou hadst no sin, what use hadst thou of a saviour? Will thy physician therefore cast thee off because thou art sick?—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 760.

In the storm of temptation, I questioned awhile, whether I were indeed a christian or an infidel, and whether faith could consist with such doubts as I was conscious of; but my judgment closed with the reason of *Dr. Jackson's* determination of this case, which supported me much, that as in the very assenting act of faith there may be such weakness as may make us cry, *Lord increase our faith; we believe, Lord help our unbelief*; so when faith and unbelief are in their conflict, it is the effects which must shew us which of them is victorious. And that he that hath so much faith as will

cause him to deny himself, take up his cross, and forsake all the profits, honours, and pleasures of this world, for the sake of Christ, the love of God, and the hope of glory, hath a saving faith, how weak soever; for God cannot condemn the soul that truly loveth and seeketh him; and those that Christ bringeth to persevere in the love of God, he bringeth to salvation.—*Life and Time*, p. 22.

CHAP. XII.—*Unsound Faith.*

THE main cause of the slighting of Christ and his salvation, is a secret root of *unbelief* in men's hearts. Whatsoever they may pretend, they do not soundly and thoroughly *believe* the word of God: they are taught in general to say, *the gospel is true*; but they never saw the *evidence* of its truth, so far as thoroughly to persuade them of it; nor have they got their souls settled on the infallibility of God's testimony, nor considered of the truth of the particular doctrines revealed in the scripture, so far as soundly to believe the words of this gospel, of the evil of sin, of the need of Christ, and what he hath done for you, and what you must *be* and *do*, if ever you will be saved by him; and what will become of you for ever if you do it not; I dare say it would cure the contempt of Christ, and you would not make light of the matters of your salvation. But men do not believe while they say they do, and verily think that they do themselves. There is a root of bitterness, and an evil heart of unbelief, that makes them depart from the living God, (*Heb.* ii. 12, and iv. 1, 2, 6). Tell any man in this congregation that he shall have a

gift of 10,000*l.* if he will but go to *London* for it ; if he believe you, he will go ; but if he believe not, he will not ; and if he will not go, you may be sure he believeth not, supposing that he is able. I know a slight belief may stand with a wicked life : such as men have of the truth of a prognostication—*it may be true, and it may be false ;* but a *true and sound* belief is not consistent with so great neglect of the things that are believed.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 731.

By this time you may see that the life of faith is quite another thing, than the *lifeless opinion* of multitudes that call themselves *believers*. To say, *I believe there is a God, a Christ, a heaven, a hell,* is as easy as it is common : but the *faith* of the ungodly is but an uneffectual dream. To dream that you are fighting, wins no victories ; to dream that you are eating, gets no strength ; to dream that you are running, rids no ground ; to dream that you are ploughing, or sowing, or reaping, procur-eth but a fruitless harvest ; and to dream that you are princes, may consist with beggary. If you do any more than *dream* of *heaven* and *hell*, how is it that you stir not, and make it not appear by the diligence of your lives, and the fervour of your duties, and the seriousness of your endeavours, that such wonderful, inexpressible, overpowering things are indeed the matters of your belief ? As you love your souls, take heed lest you take an *image of faith* to be the thing itself. *Faith* sets on work the powers of the soul, for the obtaining of that joy, and the escaping of that misery, which you believe. —*Works*, vol. iii. p. 518.

BOOK IV.

OF CONVERSION.

CHAP. I.—*State of the Unconverted.*

IF you marvel what the *hypocrite* wants, that makes his *religion* delusory and vain, I shall now tell you, I hope, to your conviction and satisfaction.

1. For all his *religion*, he wants the spirit of Christ, to dwell as his sanctifier within him; and *if any man have not the spirit of Christ, the same is none of his*, (*Rom. viii. 9*). But because this is known by the effects, I add,

2. He wants that *spiritual new birth*, by which he should be made spiritual, as his first birth made him carnal, (*John, iii. 5, 6; Rom. viii. 6, 7, 8*). He is born of the will of the flesh, and of man, but not of god, (*John, i. 13*). *From the first man, Adam, he is become a living soul; but by the second man, Christ, the Lord from Heaven; he is not yet quickened in the spirit*, (*1 Cor. xv. 45, 46*). He is not born again of the incorruptible seed, the word of God, that liveth and abideth for ever, (*1 Pet. i. 23*). He is not yet saved by the washing of regeneration, save only as to the outward baptism, and by renewing of the Holy Ghost, which is shed by Christ on all his members, that being justified by his grace, they should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, (*Tit. iii. 5, 6*). They are not new creatures, old things being not passed

away, and all things with them become new: and therefore it is certain that they are not in Christ, (2 Cor. v. 17). They have not put off the old man with his deceitful lusts, and deeds, nor have put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness, (*Eph.* iii. 22, 23, 24; *Col.* iii. 9, 10). They have but patched up the old unsanctified hearts, and smoothed over their carnal conversations with civility and plausible deportment, and so much religion as may cheat themselves, as well as blind the eyes of others: but they are strangers to the life of God, (*Eph.* iv. 18), and never were made partakers of the divine nature, which all the children of God partake of, (2 *Pet.* i. 4), nor of that holiness, without which none shall see the Lord, (*Heb.* xii. 14).—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 448.

O the time you have lost, the means and help that you have neglected, the motions that you have resisted, the swarms of evil thoughts that have filled your imagination, the streams of vain and idle words that have flowed from your mouth, the works of darkness in public and in secret, that God hath seen you in! And all this while, how empty were you in inward holiness, and how barren of good works to God or man? What have you done with all your talents? And how little or nothing hath God had of all?

And now consider what a case you are in, while you remain unconverted. You have made yourselves the sinks of sin, the slaves of Satan and the flesh; and are skilful in nothing, but doing evil: if you be called to prayers, or holy meditation, your hearts are against it, and you are not used to it, and therefore you know not how to do it to any purpose. But to think the thoughts of lust or covetousness, or hatred, or malice, or revenge; this you can do

without any toil; to speak of the world, or of your sports and pleasures, or against those that you bare ill will to, this you can do without any study. You are such as are spoken of, *Jer. iv. 22*. My people are foolish, they have not known me: they are foolish children, and have no understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. You are grown strangers to the God that made you, in whose love and service you should live, and find your chief delights. Your hearts are hardened, and you are dead in your sins: the guilt of the sins of your lives are still upon you; you can neither look into your hearts or lives, no, not on one day of your lives, or the best hour that you have spent, but you must see the ugly face of sin, which deserveth condemnation. You have made God your enemy, that should have been your only felicity. And yet you are always at his mercy and in his hands. Little do you know how long his patience will endure to you, or what hour he will call away your souls: and if death comes, alas, what a case will it find you in! how lamentably unready are you to meet him! how unready to appear before the dreadful God whom you have offended! and what a terrible appearance do you think that will be to you? Most certainly if you die before you are converted, you will not be from among the devils and damned souls an hour. — *Works*, vol. ii. p. 560.

If you are persecutors, or haters, or deriders of men, for being serious and diligent in the service of God, and fearful of sinning, and because they go not with the multitude to do evil, it is a certain sign that you are in a state of death: yea, if you love not such men, and desire not rather to be such

yourselves, than to be the greatest of the ungodly. See *Gal.* iv. 29; *Acts*, xxvi. 11; *1 Tim.* xiii. 1; *Pet.* iv. 2, 3; v. 4; *Psal.* xv. 4; *1 John*, iii. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15; *John*, xiii. 35; *Psal.* lxxxiv. 10.

If you love the world best, and set your affections most on things below, and mind most earthly things; nay, if you seek not first God's kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, and if your hearts be not in heaven, and your affections set on things that are above, and you prefer not your hopes of life eternal before all the pleasures and prosperity of this world, it is a certain sign that you are but worldly and ungodly men. See this in *Matt.* vi. 19, 20, 21; *Phil.* iii. 18, 19, 20; *Col.* iii. 1, 2, 3, 4; *Psal.* lxxviii. 25; *1 John*, ii. 15, 16, 17; *James*, i. 27; *Luke*, xii. 20, 21, and xvi. 25.

If your estimation, belief, and hopes of everlasting life through Jesus Christ, be not such as will prevail with you, to deny yourselves, and forsake father and mother, and the nearest friends, and house and land, and life, and all that you have for Christ, and for these hopes of a happiness hereafter, you are no true christians; nor in a state of saving-grace. See *Luke*, xiv. 26, 33; *Matt.* x. 37, 38, 39; *Matt.* xiii. 21, 22.

If you have not been converted, regenerated and sanctified, by the spirit of Jesus Christ, making you spiritual, and causing you to mind the things of the spirit above the things of the flesh; if this spirit be not in you, and you walk not after it, but after the flesh, making provision for the flesh, to satisfy its desires, and preferring the pleasing of the flesh, before the pleasing of God, it is certain that you are in a state of death. See *Matt.* xviii. 3; *John*, iii. 3, 5, 6; *Heb.* xii. 14; *Rom.* viii. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9,

10, 11, 12, 13; and xiii. 13, 14; *Luke*, xvi. 19, 25; and xii. 20, 21; *Heb.* xi. 25, 26; *2 Cor.* iv. 16, 17, 18, and v. 7; *Rom.* viii. 17, 18.

If you have any known sin, which you do not hate, and had not rather leave it than keep it, and do not pay, and strive and watch against it, as far as you know and observe it, but rather excuse it, plead for it, desire it, and are loth to part with it, so that your will is habitually more for it than against it, it is sign of an impenitent unrenewed heart. (1 *John*, iii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 24; *Gal.* v. 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25; *Rom.* vii. 22, 24, and viii. 13; *Luke*, xiii. 3, 5; *Matt.* v. 19, 20; *2 Tim.* ii. 19; *Psal.* v. 5; *Luke*, xiii. 27).—*Works*, vol. i. p. 11.

When you are heartless and dull under the ordinances of God, and scripture hath little life or sweetness to you, and you are almost indifferent whether you call upon God in secret or no; and whether you go to the congregation and hear the word, and join in God's praises and communion of the saints, and you have no relish in holy conference, or any ordinance, but do them merely almost for custom, or merely to satisfy your consciences, and not for any great need you feel of them, or good you find by them; this shows for certain you want some more of the rod and spur, your hearts are not sufficiently broken and awakened, but God must take you in hand again.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 574.

Mark those professors that prove apostates, and forsake the way of godliness which they seemed to embrace, and see whether they be not such as either took up some bare opinions and outward duties, upon a flash of superficial illumination, or

else such as were frightened into a course of religion, and so went on from duty to duty, for fear of being damned, when all the while their hearts were more another way, and they had rather have been excused. These hypocrites are they that are disputing so oft the obligations to their duty, and asking, how do you prove that it is a duty to pray in my family, or duty to observe the Lord's day, or to come constantly to the congregation, or to use the communion of the godly in private meetings, or to repeat sermons, or to sing psalms and the like? Intimating that they are as birds in a cage, or hens in a pen, that are boring to get out, and had rather be at liberty: if it were not for the fear of the law of God that is upon them, they had rather let all these duties alone, or take them up but now and then at an idle time, when Satan and flesh will give them leave. If a feast be prepared and spread before them, a good stomach will not stand to ask, *how can you prove it my duty to eat?* But perhaps the sick that loathe it may do so. If the cup be before the drunkard, he doth not stand on those terms, how do you prove it my duty to drink this cup, and the other cup? No, if he might have but leave he would drink on, without ever questioning whether it be a duty; if the gamester, or the whoremonger, might be sure that he should escape the punishment, he would never stick at the want of a precept, and ask, *is it my duty?* If there were but a gift of twenty pounds a man to be given to all the poor in the town, yea, and to all the people in general, I do not think I should meet with many people in the town that would draw back and say, *what word of God commandeth me to take?* or, *how prove you that it is my duty?* And why is all this? But because they have an inward love to the thing; and love will carry a man

to that which seemeth good for him, without any command or threatening. If these ungodly wretches had one spark of spiritual life in them, and any taste and feeling of the matters that concerns their soul's salvation, instead of asking, *how can you prove that I am to pray with my family, or that I must keep the Lord's day, or that I must converse with the godly, and lead a holy life?* they would be readier to say, *how can you prove that I am not to pray with my family? And that I may not sanctify the Lord's day? And that I may not have communion with the saints in holiness?* Seeing that so great a mercy is offered to the world, *why may not I partake of it as well as others?* I can perceive in many that I converse with, the great difference between a heart that loves God and holiness, and a heart that seems religious and honest without such a love; the true convert perceiveth so much sweetness in holy duties, and so much spiritual advantage by them to his soul, that he is loth to be kept back; he cannot spare these ordinances and mercies, no more than he can spare the bread from his mouth, or the clothes from his back; yea, or the skin from his flesh, no, nor so much. He loveth them, he cannot live without them; at the worst that ever he is at, he had rather be holy, than be unholy, and live a godly than a fleshly worldly life. And therefore if he had but a bare leave from God, without a command, to sanctify the Lord's day, and to live in the holy communion of the saints, he would joyfully take it with many thanks; for he need not to be driven to his rest when he is weary, nor to his spiritual food when he is hungry, nor to Christ the refuge of his soul, when the curse and accuser are pursuing him. But the unsanctified hypocrite, that never loved God or godliness in his heart, he stands questioning

and enquiring for some proof of a necessity of these courses. And if he can but bring himself to hope that God will save him without so much ado (which by the help of the devil, he may be easily brought to hope) away then goes the duty; if you could not shew him that there is a necessity of family prayer, and a necessity of sanctifying the Lord's day, and a necessity of forsaking his tippling and voluptuousness, and a necessity of living a heavenly life, he would quickly resolve of another course; for he had rather do otherwise if he durst. He never was religious from a true predominant love to God, and a holy life, but for fear of hell, and for other inferior respects.—*Direct. to a Sound Conversion*, 12mo. 1702, p. 208.

CHAP. II.—*Necessity of Conversion.*

BUT if thou wilt needs sleep on, be it known to thee, sinner, it shall not be long, if thou wilt awake no sooner, death and vengeance will awake thee. Thou wilt awake when thou seest the other world, and seest the things which thou wouldst not believe, and comest before thy dreadful judge! Thy damnation slumbereth not! (2 *Pet.* xxiii.) There are no sleepy souls in heaven, all are awake there; and the day that has awakened so many shall awaken thee; Watch then, if thou love thy soul, lest thy Lord come suddenly and find thee sleeping, (*Mark*, xiii. 34, 35, 36, 37). What I say to one, I say to all, "Watch!"—*Works*, vol. i. p. 22.

It is time for you to look home (2 *Cor.* xiii. 5;

Psal. iv. 4; *2 Pet.* i. 10), and understand now *what state your souls are in.* That you were made capable of holiness and happiness, you know; that you and all men are *fallen* from God, and holiness and happiness, unto *self*, and *sin*, and *misery*, you know; that you are so far redeemed by Christ, you know, as to having a pardoning and saving covenant tendered you, and Christ and mercy offered to your choice. But whether you are truly *penitent* believers, and renewed by the Holy Ghost, and so united unto Christ, this is the question yet unresolved; *this* is the work that is yet to do, without which there is no salvation; and if thou die before it is done, Wo to thee that ever thou wast a man! Except a man be (*John*, iii. 5; *2 Cor.* v. 17; *Rom.* viii. 7, 9; *Phil.* iii. 18, 20) *regenerate by the Spirit*, and *converted* and made a *new creature*, and of *carnal* be made *spiritual*, and of *earthly* be made *heavenly*, and of *selfish* and *sinful* be made *holy* and *obedient to God*, he can never be *saved*, no more than the devil himself can be saved.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 198.

CHAP. III.—*Signs of Conversion.*

THE predominancy or prevalency of the interest of God as our God, and Christ as our Saviour, and the spirit as our sanctifier, in the estimation of the understanding, the resolved choice of the will, and the government of the life, against all the worldly interest of the flesh, is the only infallible sign of a justified regenerate soul.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 1000.

You may easily see wherein your stability,

strength, and growth doth consist. 1. It doth not most, or much consist in speculations, or less useful truths. 2. It doth not consist in the mere heat of affections; for zeal may be misguided, and do hurt, and may prove sometimes but a mere natural or distempered sinful passion. 3. It consisteth not in mere fears, or purposes, that you are frightened into against your wills. 4. Nor doth it consist in the common gifts of grace or nature. 5. Nor yet in running into groundless singularities, and unusual strains. But, in a word, it consisteth in holy love kindled by effectual faith. When a firmly-believing soul is fullest of the love of God, and Christ, and holiness, this is the most confirmed state of soul; and in this your chiefest growth consisteth.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 954.

Whether conversion began *now*, or *before*, or *after*, I was never able to this day to know.—*Life and Times*, p. iii.



CHAP. IV.—*Effect of Conversion.*

A STATE of holiness is nothing else but the habitual and predominant devotion and dedication of soul, and body, and life, and all that we have, to God; an esteeming, and loving, and serving, and seeking him, before all the pleasures and prosperity of the flesh; making his favour and everlasting happiness in heaven our end, and Jesus Christ our way, and referring all things in the world unto that end, and making this the scope, the design, and business of our lives.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 7.

CHAP. V.—*Insufficient Conversion.*

THERE is no hope of the salvation of a sinner that continueth unconverted: flatter not yourselves with foolish hopes of the devil's making. As sure as God's word is true, there is no *hope* of it. Everlasting despair in hell is the portion of all that die unconverted and unsanctified. They will then cry out for ever, *All our hope is past and gone: we had once hope of mercy, but we refused it, and now there is no hope.* This thought that there is *no more hope* will tear the sinner's heart for ever. This is the state that I would keep you from: And do I not then seek to keep you *from despair*? (*Job*, viii. 13, 14, and xi. 20, and xxvii. 8; *Prov.* xi. 7, and xiv. 32; *Isa.* lvii. 10; *1 Pet.* i. 3, 21, and iii. 15; *1 John*, iii. 3).—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 150.

Many a thousand that are now past help, have had the word come near them, and cast them into fear, and make some stir and trouble in their souls, awakening their consciences, and forcing them to some good purposes and promises: yea, and bringing them to the performance of a half reformation; but this is not it that will serve your turn. Many have been so much changed as not to be far from the kingdom of God, and yet came short of it, (*Mark*, xii. 34). There is no promise in scripture that you shall be pardoned if you do almost repent and believe, or be saved if you be almost sanctified and obedient; but, on the contrary, the Lord has plainly declared, that you must turn or die, though you almost turn; and repent or perish, though you almost repent; and that you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, without conversion and a

new birth, although you came never so near it. God hath resolved upon the terms of your salvation, and it is in vain to hope for salvation upon any other terms.

So, if you will be shrinking and drawing back, and favouring your flesh, and will not go to the quick, you will make your conversion much more difficult; you must be brought to it again, and fetch your groans yet deeper than before, and weep over all your former tears; your doubts will be multiplied, your fears and sorrows will be increased; and all will go sorer with you than the first. O what a case will you be in, when your sores must be lanced a second time, and your bones as it were broken again! then you will wish you had gone through with it at the first.

Consider further, that half conversion doth often prove a delusion to men's souls, making them quiet on a miserable state, and so keeping them from being converted to the last. If you had never done any thing in it, you would the more easily be persuaded that your case is bad, and that there is still a necessity of a change. But when you have had some convictions and troubles of mind, and fears and sorrows, and so have fallen into an outside partial reformation, and now are persuaded that you are truly converted, when it is no such matter, what a dangerous impediment to your conversion may this prove.

I know that a half conversion, if it be known to be no more, is much better than none; and doth often prepare men for a saving work. But when this half conversion is taken for a true and saving change, as it too commonly is, it proves one of the greatest impediments to salvation. Whenever Christ shall afterwards knock at your door, you will not know him, as thinking that he dwells with

you already. If you read any books that call on you to be converted, or hear any preacher exhort you to turn, you have this at hand to cheat yourselves with, and frustrate all. You'll think this is not spoken to me; for I am converted already. O how quietly do such poor deluded sinners, daily read and hear their own misery and doom, and never once dream that they are the men meant, and therefore are never dismayed at the matter! This formeth you into a state of hypocrisy, and makes the course of your duties and lives to be hypocritical. If another man that knows himself to be still unconverted, do but read the threatenings of the word against such, or hear of the terrors of the Lord from a minister, he may be brought to confess that this is his own case, and so perceive the misery of his condition. But when such as you do read and hear these things, they never trouble you; for you think they do not touch you; you are scripture-proof and sermon-proof; and all by the delusion of your half conversion. O how zealously will such a man cry out against the sins of others! and tell them of their misery, and persuade them to turn, and shew them the danger that is near if they do not: and in the mean time little thinks that this is his own case, and that he speaks all this against his own soul. How will such men applaud a sermon that drives at the conversion of a sinner, and tells them their misery while they are unconverted? O, thinks he, this touched such and such; I am glad such a man and such a one heard it: and he little thinks it as nearly touches himself. How smoothly will he go on in any discourse against wicked and unregenerated men, as David heard the parable of Nathan, and it never once entered into their thoughts that they speak all this against themselves; till the judge shall tell them when it

is too late, thou art the man? It will turn not only the stream of your thoughts into hypocrisy and self-deceit, but also the stream of your speeches to others; yea, and the current of your prayers, and all the rest of your religious performances. When, in confession, you should acknowledge and confess your carnal and unregenerate state, you will only confess you have the infirmities of the saints, and that you have this or that sin, which yet you think is mortified. When you should importunately beg for renewing grace, you will only beg for strengthening grace or assurance; when you should be labouring to break your hearts, you will be studying to heal them, and will be hearkening after present comforts, when you have more need of godly sorrow. It will fill your mouths in prayer with pharasaical thanksgivings for the mercies of regeneration, justification, adoption, and sanctification, which you never received. Little doth many a soul know, what sanctification, and the several graces of the Spirit are, that frequently give God thanks for them.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 552.

Moreover, you know that you are uncertain of the continuance of the gospel. You know not whether you shall have such lively serious preachers as you have now; nor you know not whether you shall have such godly neighbours and company to encourage you, and help you in the work. God will remove them one after another to himself, and then you will have the fewer prayers for you, and fewer warnings and good examples, and perhaps be left wholly to the company of deceived ungodly fools, that will do nothing but hinder and discourage you from conversion. And you are not sure that religion will continue in that reputation it is now in. The times may turn before you turn;

godliness may become a scorn again, and it may be a matter of suffering, and cost you your lives, to live as the servants of Christ must do. And, therefore, if you stop at it now as a difficult thing, when you have all the helps and encouragements you can expect, and the way to heaven is made so fair; and when magistrates, and ministers, and neighbours, are ready to encourage and help you, what will you do in times of persecution and discouragement? If you cannot turn when you have all these helps and means, what will you do when they are taken from you?—*Direct. to a Sound Conversion*, 12mo. 1702, p. 6.

BOOK V.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

CHAP. I.—*The Holy Spirit.*

It is certain that every good thought which cometh into our minds, is some effect of the workings of God's spirit, as every good word and every good work is.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 647.

It is a great truth, not sufficiently considered by the wiser sort of christians, that God in his course of government over the souls, even of the justified, doth exercise great *rewards* and great punishments here; and these are much more upon the soul within, than upon the body without; even the giving of more of the *operations* of his spirit, is his great reward, and the withholding, the withdrawing, or denying its operations, is this great punishment. The sin which provoketh him is *unthankful neglect* of convictions, and holy persuasions of the Spirit, and much more wilful resistance of them: when we sin, it is not the bare sin that is all, as to the act itself, but especially the resisting of the Spirit, which in that sin we were guilty of, which we pay dearest for: when the Spirit convinceth us, reproveth us, and striveth with our hearts, and we will not yield but overcome it; and the punishment of withdrawing the *Spirit's opera-*

tions, is the more dangerous, by how much the less perceived and lamented. Usually the signs of this judgment are, for men to lose their life and love to goodness by degrees, and to grow indifferent in the matters of God; to grow formal in meditations, exhortations, and prayer, and to keep up only an affected fervency; to grow stranger to God and the life to come, and more bold with sin, and more worldly-wise, to prove duty to be no duty, and sin no sin, and to plead for every fleshly interest. Many a true christian that loseth not all grace, yet comes to so low a state of faith, that faith doth but live, but acteth not with the conquering and quickening vigour as it ought.

And alas! I must tell you, that *one gross sin*, or *many wilful lesser sins*, may so quench the spirit, as that many a year's time doth not recover it; nay, with some it is never recovered in the same degree to their death. O, if we knew what one hour's sin may lose us this way, we would not commit it for a world.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 224.

Carefully observe and cherish the motions of the Spirit of God. If ever thy soul get above this earth, and get acquainted with this heavenly life, the Spirit of God must be to thee, as the chariot to Elijah; yea, the very living principle by which thou must move and ascend. O then, grieve not thy guide, quench not thy life, knock not off thy chariot wheels! You little think how much the life of all your graces, and happiness of your souls, depend upon your ready and cordial obedience to the Spirit. When the Spirit urges thee to secret prayer, or forbids thee thy known transgressions, or points out to thee the way in which thou shouldst go, and thou wilt not regard, no wonder if heaven and thy soul be strange. If thou wilt not

follow the Spirit, while it would draw thee to Christ and thy duty, how should it lead thee to heaven, and bring thy heart into the presence of God? What supernatural help, what bold access, shall the soul find in its approaches to the Almighty, that constantly obeys the Spirit? And how backward, how dull, how ashamed, will he be in these addresses, who hath often broke away from the Spirit that would have guided him? *Christian reader*, dost thou not sometimes feel a strong impression to retire from the world, and draw near to God? Do not disobey, but take the offer, and hoist up thy sails while this blessed gale may be had. The more of this Spirit we resist, the deeper will it wound; and the more we obey, the speedier will be our pace.—*Saint's Rest*, p. 265.

CHAP. II.—*The Means of Grace.*

1st, WHEN you meet with any difficulty, or temptation, you must still remember that it is your own *dark mind*, or *backward heart*, that is the cause; and never suspect God's word or ways, no more than a sick man will blame the meat instead of his stomach, if he loathe a feast. But take occasion to renew your repentance, and think, all this is wrong of myself, who spent my youth in sin and folly, which I should have spent in hearing the word of God, and practising a godly life: What need have I now to double my labour to overcome all this?

2nd, Resolve to wait patiently on God in the use of *all his means*; and *teaching*, *time*, and *use* and *grace* will make all plain and easy and delightful to

you. Do not expect that it should come all on a sudden, without *time*, and diligence, and patience.

3rd, Keep still as an humble disciple of Christ in a *learning mind* and *way*, and turn not in self-conceitedness to cavil against what you do not understand. This is the chief thing in which conversion maketh us like *little children*, (*Matt.* xviii. 3). Children are conscious of their ignorance, and are teachable, and do not set their wits against their teachers, till they grow towards twenty years of age; and then they grow wise in their own conceits, and begin to think that their tutors are mistaken, and to set their wits against the truth which they should receive.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 181.

Instead of over-tedious *trying* and *fearing* whether you truly *consent* and *obey* or not; set yourself heartily to your duty; study to please God; and to live fruitfully in good works; resolve more against those sins which make you question your sincerity, and the practice of a godly life; and the increase of your grace, will be a constant discernible evidence; and you will have the witness in your self, that you are the son of God.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 182.

1st, Reading and hearing the word of God, and its explication and application, by your teacher. (2 *Tim.* iv. 1, 2; 1 *Tim.* iv. 13, 14; 1 *Thes.* v. 12, 13; *Acts*, ii. throughout; 1 *Cor.* ii. 14; *Heb.* xiii. 7, 17; *James*, v. 16).

2nd, Prayer, thanksgiving, praises to God, and the Lord's supper, in communion with the church.

3rd, Holy discipline, in submission to your guides, in obedience, in penitently confessing sins when necessary, and the like, if you live where such discipline is exercised. Also your labour or calling not to be neglected. Adam was to labour in innocency:

six days must you labour and do all that you have to do. (*Ex. xx*). He that will not (*2 Thes. iii. 10*) labour (if able) is unworthy to eat. Idleness was one of *Sodom's* sins. Religion must be no pretence for slothfulness. You must not (*1 John, ii. 15, 16*), love the world as your felicity, or for itself, or for your fleshly lusts; but you must make use of the world in the service of your Creator; Yea, and love it as a sanctified means of your salvation, and as a wilderness-way to your promised inheritance. As the mariner loveth not the sea for a dwelling, but as a passage to his desired port. Good husbandry is not unbecoming a good christian. You may labour for your daily bread as well as pray for it; yea, for the maintenance of your family, and that you may have things decent, and give to him that needeth. (*Rom. xii. 17; 2 Cor. viii. 21; Eph. iv. 28; 1 Tim. v. 8*).

But this is the thing that you must principally remember, that God and the (*Matt. vi. 19, 20, 33; John, vi. 27; Col. iii. 3, 4, 5*) heavenly glory is your *end*, which must still be desired for itself and above all; and the world, and all things in it, are but *means* to help you to that end; and only *as they are such*, must be valued, loved, desired, sought; and whenever they oppose God and your heavenly interest, must be forsaken, (*Luke, xiv. 26, 33; Tit. i. 15*), and used as we do hated things. —*Works*, vol. iv. p. 178.

The Spirit is from God and our Saviour, and leadeth to them. Its operations are; (*Matt. xii.*) 1. *Holy Life*, or vivacity toward God. 2. *Holy Light* to know and believe God. 3. *Holy Love*, to love God, and his government and children. If you have these, you have God's Spirit: for it is nothing else. These are God's restored image on

the soul, and the new divine nature of his regenerate adopted children.

The motions of the Spirit are, 1. Always fitted to God and holiness as the end. 2. And always actuate the three aforesaid habits, of *holy life, light, and love*. 3. And they are always agreeable to the holy scriptures: and by them must be tried.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 179-80.



CHAP. III.—*Signs of Grace.*

1. By what evidence or signs to judge, (*Matt.* xxviii. 19; *Mark*, xvi. 16; *John*, iii. 16, 18; *Gal.* v. 6, 13, 22, 23, 24; *Rom.* xiii. 10; *Matt.* v. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; *Rom.* viii. 1, 9, 13; *John*, iii. 19, 20, 21, 22; *Matt.* vi. 20, 33; 2 *Cor.* v. 8; 1 *John*, iii. 14), even by *faith working by love to God and man*; or, by your true consent to the covenant of grace, expressed in a holy obedient life. Particularly, 1. If God, to be seen and loved in the joys of the heavenly glory, be the chief end of your heart and life. 2. If Christ be taken for your only Saviour. 3. If you are desirous that by his Spirit he should perfectly sanctify you. 4. If you have no sin but what you had rather leave than live in. 5. If you love the word and means which should sanctify you, and love a holy life, and had rather have more holiness, than have all the wealth and pleasure of the world. 6. If you are willing to use God's means hereto. 7. If the main desire of your heart and drift of your life be to please God. 8. If you love God's servants for their holiness, and desire the increase of holiness in the world, and labour to do

good to the souls and bodies of others in your place as you are able; all these will prove the truth of your consent to the covenant of God, and that you have his Spirit.

2. And having the certain marks before you, examine your state impartially by them, as one that is going to the judgment of God; and what you cannot do at one time, do at another: and cease not till you are able to conclude, *that your soul is sincerely devoted to God, and trusteth on Christ for the pardon of your sins.* And if you cannot satisfy your conscience without help, advise with some able faithful minister.

3. And when you see God's graces evident in you, give him thanks for them, and rejoice in his love, and watchfully study to keep and exercise and increase the grace which he hath given you. And let not Satan make you still question all again at his pleasure.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 226.

Your strongest probabilities are from the strongest consideration of the work of God upon your souls, and the present frame and inclination of your soul to God. You may know that you have workings above nature in you; and that they have been kept alive and carried on these many years against all opposition of the flesh and the world; it hath not been a mere flash of conviction which hath been extinguished by sensuality, and left you in the darkness of security and profaneness, as others are. You dare not give up your hopes of heaven for all the world: you would not part with Christ, and say let him go, for all the pleasures of sin and treasures of the earth: if you had (as you have) an offer of God, Christ, grace, and glory, on one side, and worldly prosperity in sin on the other side, you would choose God, and let go the other: you dare

not, you would not give over praying, hearing, reading, and christian company, and give up yourself to worldly, fleshly pleasures; yet you are not assured of salvation, because you find not that delight and life in duty, and that witness of the Spirit, and that communion with God, nor that tenderness of heart, that you desire. It is well that you desire them: but though you be not certain of salvation, do not you see a great likelihood, and probability in all this? Is not your heart raised to hope, that yet God is merciful to you, and means you good? Doubtless this you might easily discern.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 870.

How should I get more grace? That is a business of great difficulty. I answer, understand what I told you before, that as the beginning of grace is in your understanding, so the heart and life of it is in your will, and the affections and passionate part are but the fruit and branches. If therefore your grace be weak, it is chiefly in an unwillingness to yield to Christ, and his word and spirit. Now how should an unwilling soul be made willing? Why thus, 1. Pray constantly as you are able, for a willing mind, and yielding inclinable heart to Christ. 2. Hear constantly those preachers that bend their doctrine to inform your understanding of the great necessity and excellency of Christ, and grace, and glory, and to persuade the will by the most forcible arguments. A persuading quickening ministry, that helps to excite your graces, and draw up your heart to Christ, is more useful than they that spend most of their time to persuade you of your sincerity, and give you comfort. 3. But especially lay out your thoughts more in the more serious considerations of those things which tend to breed and feed those particular

graces which you would have increased. Objects and moving reasons, kept much upon the mind by serious thoughts, are the great engines appointed both by nature and by grace to turn about the soul of man. Thoughts are to your soul, as taking in the air, and meat and drink into your body. Objects considered, do turn the soul into their own nature. Such as are things you most think and consider of (I mean in pursuance of them) such will you be yourself. Consideration, frequent serious consideration, is God's great instrument to convert the soul, and to confirm it; to get grace, and to keep it, and increase it. If any soul perish for want of grace, its ten to one, it's mainly for want of serious consideration.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 879.

CHAP. IV.—*Saving Grace.*

1. ARE you heartily willing to take God for your portion? And had you rather live with him in glory, in his favour and fullest love, with a soul perfectly cleansed from all sin, and never more to offend him, rejoicing with the saints in his everlasting praises, than to enjoy the delights of the flesh on earth, in a way of sin, and without the favour of God?

2. Are you heartily willing to take Jesus Christ as he is offered in the gospel? that is, to be your only Saviour, and Lord, and to give you pardon by his bloodshed, and to sanctify you by his word and spirit, and govern you by his law?

3. Are you heartily willing to live in the performance of those holy and spiritual duties of heart

and life, which God hath absolutely commanded you? And are you heartily sorry that you perform them no better? with no more cheerfulness, delight, success, and constancy?

4. Are you so thoroughly convinced of the worth of everlasting happiness, and the intolerableness of everlasting misery, and the truth of both; and of the sovereignty of God the Father, and Christ the Redeemer, and your many engagements to him; and of the necessity and good of obeying him, and the evil of sinning, that you are truly willing; that is, have a settled resolution to cleave to Christ, and obey him in the dearest, and most disgraceful, painful, hazardous, flesh-displeasing duties; even though it should cost you the loss of all your worldly enjoyments, and your life?

5. Doth this willingness or resolution already so far prevail in your heart and life, against all the interest and temptations of the world, the devil, and your flesh, that you do ordinarily practise the most strict and holy, the most self-denying, costly and hazardous duties that you know God requireth of you, and do heartily strive against all known sin, and overcome all gross sins; and when you fall under any prevailing temptation, do rise again by repentance, and begging pardon of God, through the blood of Christ, do resolve to watch and resist more carefully for the time to come?

In these five marks is expressed the gospel description of a true christian.

Having laid down these marks, I must needs add a few words for the explaining some things in them, lest you mistake the meaning, and so lose the benefit of them.

1. Observe that it is your willingness, which is the very point to be tried. And therefore, 1. Judge not by your bare knowledge. 2. Judge not

by the stirring or passionate working of your affections. I pray you forget not this rule in any of your self-examinations: it is the heart that God requir-eth: My son, give me thine heart, (*Prov.* xxiii. 26). If he hath the will, he hath the heart. He may have much of our knowledge, and not our heart; but when we know him so thoroughly as to will him unfeignedly, then he hath our heart. Affectionate workings of soul to God in Christ, are sweet things, and high and noble duties, and such as all christians should strive for; but they are not the safest marks to try states by: 1. Because there may be a solid, sincere intention, and choice in, and of the will, where there is little stirring perceived in the affections. 2. Because the will is the master commanding faculty of the soul; and so if it be right, that man is upright and safe. 3. Because the passions and affections are so mutable and uncertain. The will can command them but imperfectly; it cannot perfectly restrain them from vanities; much less can it perfectly raise them to that height, as is suitable to the excellency of heavenly objects. But the object itself, with its sensible manner of apprehension, moves them more than all the command of the will. And so we find by experience, that a godly man, when, with his utmost private endeavours, he can not command one stirring pang of divine love or joy in his soul, yet upon the hearing of some moving-sermon, or the sudden receiving of some extraordinary mercy, or the reading of some quickening book, he shall feel perhaps, some stirring of that affection. So when we cannot weep in private one tear for sin, yet at a stirring-sermon, or when we give vent to our sorrows, and ease our troubled hearts into the bosom of some faithful friend, then we find tears. 4. Because passions and affections depend so much on the temperature

of the body. To one they are easy, familiar, and at command; to another, (as honest) they are difficult, and scarce stirred at all. With most women, and persons of weaker tempers, they are easier than with men. Some cannot weep at the death of a friend, though never so dear, no nor perhaps feel very sensible inward grief; and yet, perhaps, would have redeemed his life at a far dearer rate (had it been possible) than those that can grieve and weep more abundantly. 5. Because worldly things have so great an advantage on our passions and affections. They are sensible and near us, and our knowledge of them is clear, but God is not to be seen, heard, or felt, by our senses: he is far from us, though locally present with us, we are capable of knowing but little, very little of him. Earthly things are always before our eyes, their advantage is continual. 6. Earthly things being still the object of our senses, do force our passions, whether we will or not, though they cannot force our wills. 7. Because affections and passions rise and fall, and neither are nor can be in an even and constant frame, and are therefore unfit to be the constant and certain evidence of our state; but the will's resolution and choice may be more constant. So that I advise you rather to try yourself by your will, than by your passionate stirrings of love, or longing of joy or sorrow.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 859.

Thousands deceive themselves, by misunderstanding some common passages that are spoken to comfort afflicted consciences, viz. That the least true desires after grace do prove the soul to be gracious. This is true, if you speak of the least desires which are predominant in the soul; when our desire is more habitual than our unwillingness, and we thus prefer Christ before all the world, the

least of this is an evidence of saving grace. But such desires as are subdued by the contrary desires, and such a will as is accompanied with a greater unwillingness habitually, and such a faith as is drowned in greater unbelief; these are not evidences of a saving change, nor can you justly gather any special comfort from them.

Such as the very habit and bent of the heart is, such indeed is the man. It's possible for a man, even a good man, to have two contrary ends and intentions, yea, ultimate ends; as that which is desired for itself, and referred to nothing else, is called ultimate; but it is not possible for him to have principal predominant ends. So far as we are carnal still, we make the pleasing of our flesh, the ultimate end; for, doubtless, we do not sin only by pleasing the flesh, as a means to God's glory, nor only in the mischoosing of other means; but yet this is none of our principal end, so far as men are truly sanctified. And because that is called a man's mind or will, which is the chiefest and highest in his mind and will, therefore we use to denominate men, from that only which beareth rule in them, and thus we may say with Paul, It is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me. For a disowned act that proceedeth from us against the bent and habit of our wills, and the course of our lives, from the remnants of a carnal misguided will, is not it that must denominate the person, nor is so fully ours as the contrary act; and therefore, though indeed we sinfully participate of it, yet when the question is, whether believing or unbelief, sinning or obeying, be my work, it is not comparatively to be called mine, which I am much more against than for. So on the other side, if the unsanctified have some transient, superficial, uneffectual acts, or desires, or faith, or love to God, which are con-

trary to the bent and habit of their hearts, this is not theirs, nor imputable to them, so far as hence to give them their denomination; it is not they that do it, but the common workings of the Spirit upon them.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 579.

He that will claim any title to Christ, and pardon, and salvation, must have something to shew for it more than you, and more than most of the world have to shew; for the most shall be shut out. Every man therefore that regardeth his salvation, must seriously ask his soul this question, what have I to shew for my title to salvation, more than most of the world can shew? It is not saying I hope to be saved, that will serve the turn, except I can give a reason of my hopes. Thousands that lay claim to salvation will miss of it, because they have no title to it. And that which you must have to shew, is this, a promise, or deed of gift, on God's part, and the fulfilling of the condition on your part. God saith to all men, whosoever repenteth, believeth, or is converted, shall be saved. When you have found that you repent of all your sins, and truly believe, and are converted to God, then, and not till then, you may conclude you shall be saved.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 578.

CHAP. V.—*Effects of Grace.*

WERE you but converted, you would be the living members of Christ, and his precious benefits would be yours; his blood would cleanse you from your sins, and they would be all freely forgiven you;

God would be reconciled to you, and become your friend, yea, your father and your God; and would take you for his household servants and adopted children: the Holy Ghost would dwell in you, and guide your understandings, and shew you that which flesh and blood cannot reveal, and bring you into an acquaintance with the mysteries of God: he will be a spirit of light and life within you, and work your hearts yet more to God, and give you stronger inclinations and affections to things above. He will help you when you are weak, and quicken you when you are dull, and be your remembrancer when you are forgetful of necessary things. He will help you in prayer, both for matter and manner, and help you in meditation, and conference, and other duties: he will warn you of your danger, and strengthen you against temptations, and cause you to overcome; and if you fall, he will help you to rise again, he will be an in-dwelling comforter to you, and so effectually speak peace to you in the midst of your disquietness, that by speaking it he will create it in you: and in the multitude of your thoughts within you, his comforts will delight your souls. O what a life might you live, if Christ by his spirit did once live in you! You may easily conjecture how tender Christ would be of his own members, how dearly he would love them, how constantly he would watch over them, and how plentifully he would provide for them, and how safely he would preserve them. And if you should come into a rough way, he would lead you out: afflictions would never be laid upon you but for your good; and continue no longer than your need requireth them, and be taken off at last to your satisfaction and contentment. Indeed your life would be a life of mercies; and that which is but a common mercy to common men, would be a special mercy to you,

as coming from your father's love, and furthering your salvation, and hinting out to you your everlasting mercies.

What life and joy would your souls receive from the many, the full, and free promises of grace! Were you once but truly sanctified and made anew, your condition would be often comfortable, but always safe; and when you were in the greatest fears and perplexities, you would still be fast in the arms of Christ: and what a life would that be, to have daily access to God by prayer; to have leave in all your wants and dangers to seek to him with a promise of hearing and success; that you may be sure of much more from him, than a child can from the tenderest father, or a wife from the most loving husband upon earth. What a life would it be, when you may always think on God as your felicity, and fetch your highest delights from him, from whom the ungodly have their greatest terrors? And it is no contemptible part of your benefits, that you may live among his people, and in their special love, and have a special communion with them, and an interest in their prayers, and may possess among them the privileges of the saints and the ordinances of God: that instead of idle talk, and the unprofitable fellowship of the children and works of darkness, you may join with the church of God in his praises, and feed with them at his table on the body and blood of Christ, and then have conveyances of renewed grace, and a renewed pardon sealed to your souls; but long should I stay, if I should but tell you of one half of the blessings of a sanctified and spiritual state. In a word, God would be yours, Christ would be yours, the Holy Ghost would be yours, all things would be yours; the whole world would have some relation to your welfare; devils would be subdued to you, and cast

out of your souls; sin would be both pardoned, and overcome; angels would be ministering spirits unto you for your good: the promises of scripture would be yours; and everlasting glory would at last be yours; and while you staid on earth, you might comfort yourselves as oft as you would, with the believing foresight of that inconceivable, unspeakable, endless felicity.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 561.

CHAP. VI.—*Application of Grace.*

LIVE in the exercise of those graces and duties, which are contrary to the sins which you are most in danger of. For grace and duty are contrary to sin, and killeth it, and cureth us of it, as the fire cureth us of cold, or health of sickness.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 82.

Remember that *your part in affliction* is to do *your duty*, and to *get the benefit of it*; but to *remove* it is *God's part*: therefore be you careful about that part which is your *own*, and then make no question but God will do *his part*. Let it be your first question therefore *What is it that I am obliged to in this condition?* What is the *special duty* of one in this sickness, this poverty, imprisonment, restraint, contempt, or slander which I undergo? Be careful daily to *do that duty*, and then never fear the issue of your suffering: nothing can go amiss to him that is found in the way of his *duty*.

And let it be your next question, what spiritual good may be got by this affliction? May not my repentance be renewed? My self-denial, humility,

contempt of the world, patience, and confidence on God, be exercised and increased by it? And is not this the end of my heavenly father? Is not his rod an act of love and kindness to me? Doth he not offer me by it all this good?—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 643.

CHAP. VII.—*Perseverance.*

THE very point that no justified man shall ever fall from Christ, is not so clear and fully revealed in scripture, and past all doubt from the assault of objections, as that a poor soul in his relapsed estate should venture his everlasting salvation wholly on this, supposing that he were certain that he was once sincere. For my own part, I am persuaded, that no rooted believer, that is habitually and groundedly resolved for Christ, and hath crucified the flesh and the world (as all have that are thoroughly Christ's) do ever fall quite away from him afterwards: but I dare not lay my salvation on this. And if I were no surer of my salvation, than I am of the truth of this my judgment, to speak freely, my soul would be in a very sad condition.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 900.

Lastly, bethink you well what is the meaning of all these texts of scripture, and the reason that the Holy Ghost doth speak to us in this manner, (*Col.* i. 21, 22, 23). And you hath he reconciled to present you holy, if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, (*John*, xv. 4). Abide in me and I in you. 6. If ye abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and withered. 7. If ye abide in

me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will. (*Heb.* iv. 1). Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it, (*Jude*, 21). Keep yourselves in the love of God, (*1 Cor.* x. 4, 5, 12). They drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ; but with many of them God was not well pleased; wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall; (*Rom.* xi. 20, 21). Be not high-minded, but fear, for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee, (*Gal.* v. 4). Ye are fallen from grace, (*Matt.* x. 22). He that endureth to the end shall be saved, (*Matt.* xxiv. 13; *Heb.* iii. 6, 14). Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of hope firm unto the end; for we are partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of confidence stedfast unto the end, (*Heb.* iv. 11). Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief, (*Rev.* ii. 25). Hold fast till I come, (26). And he that overcometh and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, (*Rev.* iii. 2, 3; and ii. 4).—*Works*, vol. i. p. 487.

I confess, when a man is truly converted, the principal part of his danger is over; he is safe in the love and care of Christ, and none can take him out of his hands. But this is but part of the truth, the other part must be taken with it, or we deceive ourselves. There is still a great deal of work before us, and holiness is still the way to happiness, and much care and diligence is required at our hands, and it is no more certain that we shall be saved by Christ, than it is that we shall be kept in faith, and love, and obedience by him. It is as true that none

can separate us from the love of God, and from a care to please him, and from a holy diligence in the work of our salvation, as that none can take us out of his hands, and bring us into a state of condemnation. He that is resolved to bring us to glory, is as much resolved to bring us to it by perseverance in holiness, and diligent obedience, for he never decreed the one without the other, and he will never save us by any other way. Indeed, when we are converted, we have escaped many and grievous dangers; but yet there are many more before us, which we must by care and diligence escape. We are translated from death to life, but not from earth to heaven. We have the life of grace, but we are short of the life of glory. And why have we the life of grace, but to use it, and live by it? Why came we into the vineyard, but to work? And why came we into the army of Christ, but to fight? Why came we into the race, but to run for the prize? Or why turned we into the right way, but to travel in it? We never did God faithful service, till the day of our conversion, and then it is that we begin; and shall we be so sottish as to think we have done when we have but begun? Now you begin to live that before were dead: now you begin to awake that before were asleep: and therefore you should now begin to work who before did nothing, or rather a thousand-fold worse than nothing. Work is the effect of life, it is the dead that lie still in darkness, and do nothing: if you had rather be alive than dead, you should rather delight in action than in idleness. It's now that you set to sea, and begin your voyage for the blessed land; many a storm, and wave, and tempest you must expect. Many a combat with temptations you must undergo; many a hearty prayer have you yet to pour forth; many and many

a duty to perform to God and man. 'Think not to have done your care and work, till you have done your lives. Whether you come in at the first hour or the last, you must work till night if you will receive your wages. And think not this a grievous doctrine. It is your privilege, it is your joy, your earthly happiness, that you may be so employed; that you, that till now have lived like swine, or moles, or earthly vermin, may now take wing and fly to God, and walk in heaven, and talk with saints, and be guarded by angels; is this a life to be accounted grievous? Now you begin to come to yourselves, to understand what you have to do in the world, to live like men, and you may live like angels! And therefore, now you should begin accordingly to bestir yourselves. I would not have you retain the same measure of fears of God's displeasure, nor the same apprehensions of your misery, nor the doubts and perplexities of mind, which you were under at your first conversion; for these were occasioned by the passage in your change, and the weakness of your grace in that beginning, and your former folly made them necessary for a time; but I would have you retain your fear of sinning, and be much more in the love of God, and in his service, than you was at first. Temptations will haunt you to the last hour of your lives; if therefore you would not fall by those temptations, you must watch and pray to the last. Give not over watching till Satan give over tempting, and watching advantages against you. The promise is still but on condition that you persevere and abide in Christ, and continue rooted and stedfast in the faith, and overcome and be faithful unto death, as you may see in *John*, xv. throughout; *John*, viii. 31; *Rev.* ii. and iii.; *Col.* i. 22, 23. Work out therefore your salvation with fear and trembling, (*Phil.* ii. 12). If you

have begun resolvedly, proceed resolvedly. It's the undoing of men's souls, to think that all the danger is over, and lose their apprehensions of it, when they are yet but in the way; when their cares and holy fears abate, their watch goes down; the soul is laid open as a common wilderness, and made a prey to every lust, and therefore still know your work is not done, till your life be done.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 950.

CHAP. VIII.—*Imputation.*

THE imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, is not a scripture phrase, and therefore not necessary: nor is sanctification a scripture phrase.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 556.

CHAP. IX.—*Hope:*

FLATTER not yourselves with the hope of living long on earth, and look not at death and the following life as a great way off. The power of tempting vanities lyeth in men's hopes of long enjoying them; to a man under the sentence of present death they have little power, and the best things that seem far off, do not much and powerfully affect us. Live therefore as dying men, and you will have the mind and choice of dying men.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 704.

Hope is that Grace by which a soul that *believeth* the gospel to be true, doth comfortably expect that

the benefits promised shall be its own; it's an applying act.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 833.

Overmuch sorrow greatly hindereth *hope*; when men think that they do believe God's word, and that his promises are all true to others, yet cannot they *hope* for the promised blessings to themselves: hope is that grace by which a soul that *believeth* the gospel to be true, doth comfortably expect that the benefits promised shall be it's own; it's an applying Act. The first act of faith, saith the gospel, is true, which promiseth grace and glory through Christ. The next act of faith saith, I will trust my soul and all upon it, and take Christ for my Saviour and help; and then *hope* saith, I hope for this salvation by him: But melancholy, overwhelming sorrow and trouble is as great an adversary to this *hope*, as water is to fire, or snow to heat. Despair is its very pulse and breath. Fain would such have hope, but they cannot. All their thoughts are suspicious, and misgiving, and they can see nothing but danger, and misery, and a helpless state. And when *hope*, which is the anchor of the soul, is gone, what wonder if they be continually tost with storms!—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 833.

CHAP. X.—*Rejoicing.*

You must seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and then other things shall be added to you, (*Matt.* vi. 33); so must you rejoice first in the kingdom of heaven, and the righteousness that is the way thereto, and then you may add a moderate rejoicing in the things below, in a due sub-

ordination thereunto. You have the sum in the words of the Holy Ghost, (*Jer. ix. 23, 24*), *Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercise loving kindness, and judgment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.*—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 814.

BOOK VI.

NECESSITY OF GOOD WORKS.

THERE are readers who will think the distribution of subjects under this head erroneous: but the common idea of good works amongst nominal christians, appears to the collector of these papers to be utterly mistaken: thousands attach no other idea to the expression, but that of giving away money; but this is a notion contrary to the first great command of the moral law. When many are so apt to draw vague comparisons between faith and works, it becomes the more necessary that the notion of works should be correct, and not contracted within the narrow sphere to which worldly-minded men are so ready to settle the limits.

CHAP. I.—*Love of God.*

1. THE *love* of God and goodness is the divine nature: and God cannot but love his own nature in us: it is his image, which (as in its several degrees) he loveth for himself, and next to himself.

2. The *love* of God is the *rectitude* of man's soul;

its soundness, health and beauty : and God loveth the rectitude of his creatures.

3. The *love* of God is the final, perfect operation of the soul; even that end which it was created and redeemed for: and God loveth to have his works attain their end, and to see them in their perfection.

4. The *love* of God is the *goodness* of the soul itself; and goodness is *amiableness*, and must needs be loved by him that is goodness and perfection himself.

5. The *love* of God is our *uniting adhesion* to him: and God, that first draweth up the soul to this union, will not himself reject us, and avoid it.

6. *Love* is a pregnant, powerful, pleasing grace: it delivereth up ourselves, and all that we have, to God: it delighteth in duty: it conquereth difficulties: it contemneth competitors, and trampleth on temptations; it accounteth nothing too much, nor too dear for God. Love is the soul's nature, appetite and *pondus*, according to which it will ordinarily act. A man's love is *his will, his heart, himself*: and if God have our love, he hath *ourselves*, and our all: so that God cannot but love the soul that truly loveth him as God.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 545.

1. The sanctifying of the soul by renewing grace. This is the giving of the spirit, as he is given to all true christians.

2. Herein the Holy Ghost makes us perceive the exceeding desirableness of the love of God, and maketh us most desire it.

3. He giveth the soul some easing hope of the love of God.

4. He quieteth the doubts, and fears, and troubles of the soul.

5. He raiseth our hopes, by degrees, to confident assurance.

6. Then the thoughts of God's love are pleasant to the soul, and give it such delight as we feel in the love and fruition of our most valued and beloved friends.

7. The soul in this state is as *unapt* to be jealous of God, or to question his love, as a good child or wife to question the love of a parent or husband, or to hear any that speak evil of them.

8. This then becomes the habitual state of the soul, in all changes to live in the delightful sense of the love of God, as we do live in pleasure with our dearest friends.

O blessed state, and first-fruits of heaven. And happy are they that do attain it! And though lower degrees have their degree of happiness, yet how far short are such, in goodness, amiableness, and comfort, of those that are rich in grace.

This pre-supposeth, 1. Knowledge of God and the gospel. 2. True belief and hope. 3. A sincere and fruitful life. 4. Mortification as to idol worldly vanities. 5. A conviction of our sincerity in all this. 6. A conclusion that God doth love us.

But yet it is somewhat above all this. A man may have this in his mind and mouth, and yet want this gust of effused love upon his heart. These are the way to it, but not itself.

This is the greatest good on this side heaven; to which all wealth and honour all fleshly pleasure and long life, all learning and knowledge, are unworthy to be once compared: briefly,

1. It is the flower and highest part of God's image on man.

2. It is the soul's true communion with God,

and fruition of him, which carnal men deride: even as our eye hath communion with the sun, and the flourishing earth enjoys its reviving heats.

3. It is that which all lower grace doth tend to, as childhood doth to manhood: and what is a world of infants comparatively good for?

4. It is that which most properly answereth the design of redemption, and the wonders of God's love therein; and all the tenor of the gospel.

5. It is that which is most fully called *the Spirit of God*, or *Christ*, in us: he hath lower works, but this is his great work, by which he possesseth us, as God's most pleasant habitation; for we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of power and love, and a sound mind, (2 Tim. i. 7).

6. It is only that which all men in general desire, I mean, the only satisfying content and pleasure that man is capable of on earth. All men would have quieting and constant pleasure, and it is to be found in nothing else but the effused love of God.

7. It is that which will make every burden light; and all affliction easy: when the sense of God's love is still upon the soul, all pains and crosses will be but as blood-letting by the kindest physician, to save the patient's life. God will not be suspected or grudged at in suffering; his love will sweeten all.

8. It will overcome abundance of temptations, which no men's wit, or learning, or knowledge of the words of scripture will overcome. No arguments will draw a loving child or wife, from parents or husbands that they know doth love them. Love is the most powerful disputant.

9. It puts a mellow sweetness into all our duties: when we hear the word or receive the Sacrament, it

is to such a soul, as pleasant food to the most healthful man: when we pray, or praise God, it comes from a comforted heart, and excites and increaseth the comfort it comes from. O who can be backward to draw near to God in prayer or meditation, who tasteth the sweetness of his love? This is religion indeed, and tells us what its life, and use, and glory is: this is true, walking with God in the best degree: when the soul liveth in the taste of his love, the heart will be still with him, and that will be its pleasure: and God most delights in such a soul.

10. This is it that putteth the sweetest relish on all our mercies: deny God's love, and you deny them all. If thou taste not his love in them, you taste little more than a beast may taste: poor food and raiment is sweet, with the sense of the love of God. Had I more of this, I should lie down, and rise, and walk in pleasure and content: I could bear the loss of other things: and though nature will feel pains, I should have pleasure and peace in the midst of all my pains and groans. This is the white stone, the new name: no man well knoweth it who never felt it in himself.

There is no dying comfortably without this experienced taste of the love of God. This will draw up the desires of the soul: love tasted, casteth out fear: though God be holy and just, and judgment terrible, and hell intolerable, and the soul hath no distinct idea of its future state out of the body, and though we see not whither it is that we must go, the taste of God's love will make it go joyfully, as trusting him; as a child will go any where in his father's power and hand.

But all the knowledge in the world without this, quiets not a departing soul.

A man may write as many books, and preach as

many sermons of heaven as I have done, and speak of it, and think of almost nothing else, and yet till the soul be sweetened and comforted with the love of God shed abroad on it by the Holy Ghost, death and the next life will be rather a man's fear than his desire. And the common fear of death which we see in the far greatest part even of godly persons, doth tell us, that though they may have saving desires and hopes, yet this sense of God's love on the heart is rare.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 942.

This effused love would confute temptations that are drawn from thy afflictions; and make thee believe that they are not so bad as flesh representeth them: it would understand that every son that God loveth he chasteneth, that he may not be condemned with the world; and that he may be partaker of his holiness, and the end may be the quiet fruit of righteousness; it would teach us to believe that God in very faithfulness doth afflict us; and that it is a good sign that the God of Love intendeth a better life for his beloved, when he trieth them with so many tribulations here: and though *Lazarus* be not saved for his sufferings, it signifieth, that God, who loved him, had a life of comfort for him, when he had his evil things on earth. When pangs are greatest, the birth is nearest.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 945.

Exercise thyself in palms of praise, and daily magnify the love of God, that the due mention of it may warm and raise thy love to him, who will answer thy fears, which arise from mere weakness of grace and duty: indeed it will give no other comfort to an unconverted soul, but that he may be accepted if he come to God by Christ, with

true faith and repentance ; and that it is possible. But it should be easy to believe, that a tender father will not kill or cast out a child for weakness, crying, or uncleanness. Divine love will accept and cherish even weak faith, weak prayer, and weak obedience and patience, which are sincere.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 945.

Millions love the world that miss of it: but no man misseth of God that loveth him above the world.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 440.

In the very exciting and exercise of this holy love, your assurance of your own special interest in Christ, would be sooner and more comfortably brought about, than by searching to find either *evidence of pardon* before you find your *love to God*; or to find your *love to God*, before you have *laboured to get and exercise it*.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 554.

Let the knowledge and love of God, and your obedience to him, be the works of your religion; and the everlasting fruition of him in heaven, be the continual end and ruling motive of your hearts and lives, that your very conversation may be with God in heaven.

You are so far holy, as you are divine and heavenly. A christian indeed is casting up his accounts, being certain that this world doth make no man happy, hath been led by Christ to seek a happiness with God above. If you live not for this everlasting happiness, if you trade not for this, if this be not your treasure, your hope and home, the chiefest matter of your desire, love and joy, and if all things be not prest to serve it, and despised when they stand against it, you live not indeed a christian life. God and heaven, or God in heaven,

is the life and soul, the beginning and the end, the sum, the all of true religion. And therefore it is that we are directed to lift up our heads and hearts, and begin our prayers with, Our Father which art in heaven, and end them with ascribing to him the kingdom, power, and glory. It is not the creatures, but God the Creator, that is the Father, the guide and the felicity of souls, and therefore the ultimate end and object of all religious actions and affections. Dwell still upon God, and dwell in heaven, if you would understand the nature and design of christianity. Take God for all, that is, for God; study after the knowledge of him in all his works; study him in his word, study him in Christ, and never study him barely to know him, but to know him that you may love him: take yourselves as dead when you live not in the love of God; keep still upon your hearts, a lively sense of the infinite difference between him and the creature; look on all the world as a shadow, and on God as the substance; take the very worst that man can do, to be in comparison of the punishments of God, but as a flea-biting to the sorest death; and take all the dreaming pleasures of the world, to be less in comparison with the joys of heaven, than one drop of honey is to a thousand years' possession of all the felicities upon earth. Think not that all the pleasures, honours, or riches of the world, are worthy to be named in comparison of heaven; nor the greatest of men to be worthy to be thought on, in comparison to God. As one straw or feather won or lost, would neither much rejoice or trouble you, if all cities or lands were yours; so live as men whose eyes are open, and who discern a greater disproportion between the portion of a wordling and a saint. Let God be your king, your father, your master, your friend, your

wealth, your joy, your all. Let not a day go over your heads, in which your hearts have not some converse with God in heaven. When any trouble overtake you on earth, look to heaven, and remember that it is there that rest and joy are prepared for believers. When you are under any want, or cross, or sorrow, fetch not your comforts from any hopes of deliverance here on earth, but from the place of your final full deliverance. If you feel any strangeness and backwardness on your minds to heavenly contemplation, do not make light of them, but presently by faith get up to Christ, who must make your thoughts of heaven familiar, and seek a remedy before your estrangedness increase. The soul is in a sad condition, when it cannot fetch encouragement from heaven, for then it hath none, or worse than none. When the thoughts of heaven will not sweeten all your crosses, and relieve your minds against all the encumbrances of earth, your souls are not in a healthful state; it is time then to search out the cause, and seek a cure before it come to worse.

There are three great causes of this dark and dangerous state of soul, which make the thoughts of heaven uneffectual and uncomfortable to us, which therefore must be overcome with the daily diligence of your whole lives.

First, Unbelief, which makes you look towards the life to come, with doubtings and uncertainty; and this is the most common, radical, powerful, and pernicious impediment to a heavenly life. The second is the love of present things, which being the vanity of a poor low fleshly mind, the reviving of reason may do much to overcome it; but it's the sound belief of the life to come that must prevail. The third, is the inordinate fear of death,

which hath so great advantage in the constitution of our nature, that it is commonly the last enemy which we overcome, (as death itself is the last enemy which Christ overcometh for us). Bend all your strength and spend your days in striving against these three great impediments of a heavenly conversation; and remember, so far as you suffer your hearts to retire from heaven, so far they retire from a life of christianity and peace.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 956.

The heart God made for himself, and the heart he will have; or else whoever hath it shall have it to its woe. He will be its *rest*, or it shall never have rest; and he will be its *happiness*, or it shall be miserable everlastingly.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 450.

CHAP. II.—Sovereignty of God.

THE first thing that I would have you oft to think on, is the nature of that God with whom ye have to do. Consider, that if he be the most wise, it is the strongest reason in the world that he should rule you. If he be good and infinitely good, there is all the reason in the world that you should love him; and there is no shew of reason why you should love the world or sin before him. If he be faithful and true, his threatenings must be feared, and his promises must not be distrusted, and there is no reason that you should make any question of his word. If he be holy, then holiness must needs be most excellent, and those that are the holiest must needs be the best, because they are like to

God; and then he must be an enemy to sin, and to all that are unholy, because they are contrary to his nature.

Consider that he is Almighty, and there is no resisting him, or standing out against him; in the twink of an eye can he snatch thy guilty soul from thy body, and cast it where sin is better known. A word of his mouth can set all the world against thee, and set thine own conscience against thee too; a frown of his face can turn thee into hell; and if he be thy enemy it is no matter who is thy friend, for all the world cannot save thee if he do but condemn thee. They are blessed whom he blesseth, and they are cursed whom he curseth. He was from eternity, and thou art as it were but of yesterday; thy being is from him, thy life is in his hands, thou canst not live an hour without him, thou canst not fetch a breath without him, nor think a thought, nor speak a word, nor stir a foot or hand without him; thou mayst better live without bread or drink, or fire, or air, or earth, or water, than without him. All the world is before him but as a drop of the bucket, or as a little sand of dust that should be laid in balance with all the earth. Hadst thou but compassed about this lower world, and seen all the nations of it, and it's wonderful furniture, and seen the great deeps of the mighty ocean, and the abundance of creatures that be in all, O what thoughts then would thou have of God! But if thou hadst been above the stars, and seen all the sun in its glory, and seen the blessed glorious Angels, and all the inhabitants of the higher world, O then what thoughts of God would thou entertain? O, but if it were possible that thou had seen his glory, or seen him in Christ, the now glorified Redeemer, what apprehensions would thou have of him then? Then how would

thou abhor the name of sin, and how weary would thou be of the pleasantest life that sensuality could afford thee? Then thou wouldest quickly know that no love can be great enough, and no praises can be high enough, and no service can be holy and good enough for such a God; then you would soon know that this God is not to be neglected or dallyed with, nor a God to be resisted, nor provoked by the breaking of his laws. It is eternal life to know this God, (*Joh. xvii. 3*). And for want of knowing him, it is that sin aboundeth in the world. This maketh holiness so scarce and so lean, men worship they care not how, because they worship they know not whom. O therefore dwell on the meditations of the Almighty. So far as he doth possess thy mind, there will be no place for sin and vanity. One would think, if I should set you no further task, and tell you of no other matter for meditation, this one should be enough, for this one is in a manner all.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 559.

CHAP. III.—*Fear of God.*

WOULD you know who it is that is the christian indeed? *He is one that liveth* (in some measure) *as if he saw the Lord*: believing in that God that dwelleth in the inaccessible light, that cannot be seen by mortal eyes, he liveth as before his face. He speaks, he prays, he thinks, he deals with men, as if he saw the Lord stand by. No wonder therefore if he do it with *reverence* and *holy fear*.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 517.

Our walk with God must be with the greatest re-

verence; were we never so much assured of his special love to us, and never so full of *faith* and *joy*, our reverence must be never the less for this. Though love cast out that guilty fear which discourageth the sinner from hoping and seeking for the *mercy* which would save him, and which disposeth him to hate and fly from God, yet doth it not cast out that reverence to God, which we owe him as his creatures, so infinitely below him as we are. It cannot be that God should be known and remembered as God, without some admiring and awful apprehensions of him. Infiniteness, omnipotency, and inaccessible majesty and glory, must needs affect the soul that knoweth them, with reverence and self-abasement.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 712.

CHAP. IV.—*Trust in God.*

SOMETIMES *the guilt of renewed infirmities, and decays*, doth renew distrust, and make us shrink, and we are like the child in the mother's arms, *that feareth when he loseth his hold, as if his safety were more in his hold of her, than in her hold of him.* Weak duties have weak expectations of success. In this case, what an excellent remedy hath faith, in looking to the perpetual intercession of Christ; Is he praying for us in the heavens, and shall we not be bold to pray, and expect an answer? *Oh! remember that he is not weak, when we are weak; and that it concerneth us, that he prayeth for us; and that we have now an unchangeable priest, who is able to save them to the utmost, or to perpetuity, that come (sincerely) to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them,*

(*Heb.* vii. 24, 25). *If you heard Christ pray for you, would it not encourage you to pray, and persuade you that God will not reject you? Undoubtedly it would.*—*Works*, vol. i. p. 60.

Understand the *true* method of *peace* of conscience, and judge not of the state of your souls upon deceitful grounds. As *presumptuous hopes* do keep men from conversion and embolden them in sin, so causeless fears do hinder our love and praise of God, by obscuring his loveliness; and they destroy our *thankfulness* and our delight in God, and make us a burden to ourselves, and a grievous stumbling block to others. The *general grounds* of all your comfort, are, 1. The gracious nature of God (*Exod.* xxxiv. 6). 2. The sufficiency of Christ (*Heb.* vii. 25), and the truth, and (*John*, iv. 42) universality of the promise, which giveth *Christ and life* to all, if they will accept him; but this *acceptance* is the proof of your particular title; without which, these do but aggravate your sin. Consent to God's covenant is the true condition and proof of your title to God as your father, saviour, and sanctifier, and so to the saving blessings of the covenant: which *consent* if you *survive*, must produce the duties which you consent to. He that heartily consenteth that God be his God, his saviour and sanctifier, is in a state of life. But this includeth the rejection of the world. (*John*, iii. 16; 1 *Tim.* iv. 10, and 24; *Matt.* xxviii. 19, 20; *Rev.* xxii. 17; *Isa.* lv. 1, 2, 3, 6, 7). *Much knowledge, and memory, and utterance, and lively affections*, are all very desirable; but you must judge your state by none of these, for they are all uncertain. But 1. If God and holiness, and heaven, have the highest estimation of your practical judgment, as being esteemed *best for you*. 2. And be

preferred in the *choice* and *resolution* of your *wills*, and that *habitually*, before all the pleasures of the world. 3. And the first and *chiefly sought* in your *endeavour*s, this is the infallible proof of your sanctification.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 203.

Very many are my *experiences* of that wondrous MERCY which hath measured my pilgrimage, and filled up my days. Never did God break his promise with me; never did he fail nor forsake me: had I not provoked him by rash and wilful sinning, how little interruption of my peace and comforts had I ever been likely to have had? And shall I now *distrust* him at the last? Shall I not *trust*, and quietly trust, that infinite *wisdom*, *love*, and *power*, whom I have so long trusted, and found so good? —*Works*, vol. iii. p. 911.

I am more solicitous than I have been about my duty to God, and less solicitous about his *dealings* with me, as being assured that he will do all things well; and as acknowledging the goodness of all the declarations of his holiness, even in the punishment of man; as knowing that there is no rest but in the will and goodness of God.

Though my works were never such as could be any temptation to me to dream of obliging God by proper merit, in commutative justice; yet one of the most ready, constant, undoubted evidences of my uprightness and interest in his covenant, is the consciousness of my *living as devoted to him*: and I the easier believe the pardon of my failings through my Redeemer, while I know that I serve no other master, and that I know no other end, or trade, or business; but that I am employed in his work, and make it the business of my life, and live to him in this world, notwithstanding my in-

firmities, and this *bent* and *business* of my life, with my longing *desires* after perfection, in the knowledge and belief, and love of God, and in a holy and heavenly mind and life, are the two standing, constant, discernible evidences, which most put me out of doubt of my sincerity; and I find that *constant action* and *duty* is it that keepeth the first always in sight; and *constant wants* and *weaknesses*, and coming short of my *desires*, do make those *desires* still the more *troublesome*, and so the more easily still perceived.

Though my habitual judgment and resolution, and scope of life be still the same, yet I find a great mutability as to actual *apprehensions* and degrees of grace; and consequently find that so mutable a thing as the mind of man, would never keep itself if God were not its keeper.—*Life*, p. 134.

To distrust all creatures, even thyself is not unreasonable; but to distrust God, hath no just excuse. Fly from sin, from Satan, from temptations, from the world, from sinful flesh and *idol-self*; but fly not from him that is goodness, love, and joy itself: fear thine enemy, but trust thy father: if thy heart be reconciled to him, and his service, by the Spirit, he is certainly reconciled to thee through Christ; and if he be for thee, and justify and love thee, who shall be against thee, or condemn thee, or separate thee from his love? If thy unreconciled will do make thee doubt of his reconciliation, it's time to abhor and lay by thy enmity: *consent*, and be sure that he *consenteth*: be willing to be his, and in holiness to serve him, and to be united in joyful glory to him, and then be sure that he is willing to accept thee, and receive thee to that glory. O dark and sinful soul! how little dost thou know thy *friend*, thy *self*, or *God*, if

thou canst more easily and quietly trust thy life, thy soul, and hopes to the *will* of thy *friend*, or of thy *self* (if thou hadst power) than to the *will* of God? Every dog would be at home, and with his master; much more every ingenuous child with his father; and though enemies distrust us, wife and children will not do so, while they believe us just. And hath God ever shewed himself either unfaithful or unmerciful to me?—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 911.

“To thee, O Lord, as to a *faithful Creator*, I commit my soul (1 *Pet.* iv. 19). I know that thou art the *faithful God*, who keepest covenant and mercy with them that love thee, and keep thy *Commandments* (*Deut.* vii. 9). Thou art *faithful*, who hast called me to the communion of thy son *Jesus Christ our Lord* (1 *Cor.* i. 9). Thy faithfulness hath saved me in and from temptation (1 *Cor.* x. 13). It hath established me, and kept me from prevailing evil (2 *Thess.* iii. 3). And it will keep my spirit, soul, and body to the coming of Christ (1 *Thess.* v. 23, 24). It is in *faithfulness* that thou hast afflicted me (*Psal.* cxix. 75), and shall not I trust thee then to save me? It is thy *faithful word*, that all thine elect shall obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory; and if we be dead with him, shall live with him, and if we suffer, we shall also reign with him (2 *Tim.* x. 11, 12).

“To thee, O my Saviour, I commit my soul; it is thine own by redemption, it is thine own by covenant, it is marked and sealed by thy spirit as thine own, and thou hast promised not to lose it, (*John*, vi. 39).

“Thou wast made like us thy brethren, that thou mightest be a merciful and faithful high priest

in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for our sins: by thy blood we have boldness to enter into the holiest, even by the new and living consecrated way: cause me to draw near with a sincere heart, in full assurance of faith, by thee that art the high priest over the house of God; for he is faithful that has promised life through thee (*Heb.* xix. 20, 21, 22, 23). Thy name is *faithful* and *true* (*Rev.* xix. 11), and *faithful* and *true* are all thy promises (*Rev.* xxii. 6, and xxi. 5). Thou hast promised *rest* to weary souls that come to thee (*Matth.* xi. 28; *2 Thess.* i. 7). I am weary of suffering, and weary of sin; weary of my flesh, and weary of my darkness, and dullness, and distance, and of this wicked, blind, unrighteous, and confounded world; and whither should I look for *rest*, but home to my heavenly father and to thee? I am but a bruised reed, but thou wilt not break me; I am but a smoking flax, but thou wilt not quench what thy grace has kindled; but thou in whose name the nations trust, wilt bring forth judgment unto victory (*Matt.* xii. 20, 21). The Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none of them that trust in thee shall be desolate (*Psal.* xxxiv. 22). Therefore will I wait on thy name, for it is good, and will trust in the mercy of God for ever (*Psal.* lii. 8, 9). The Lord is good; a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him (*Nah.* i. 7). Sinful fear is a snare; but he that putteth his trust in the Lord, shall be set on high (*Prov.* xxix. 25). Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, and such as turn aside to lies (*Psal.* xl. 4). Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth: by thee have I been holden up from the womb, and my praise shall be continually of thee: cast me not off

now in the time of age; forsake me not when my strength faileth, O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto I have declared thy wondrous works: now also when I am old and grey, O God, forsake me not (*Psal.* xvii. 5, 6, 9, 17, 18). Leave not my soul destitute, for mine eyes are toward thee, and my trust is in thee (*Psal.* xiv. 8). I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living: even where they that live shall die no more. The sun may cease to shine on man, and the earth to bear us; but God will never cease to be love, nor to be faithful in his promises. Blessed be the Lord, who hath commanded me so safe and quiet a duty, as to trust him, and cast all my cares on him, as on one that hath promised to care for me.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 912.

As the eyes of a servant are on the hand of his master, so are his eyes on God for all supplies; and this is the part of the work of the spirit of adoption, who teacheth us to cry *Abba*, father; and as children, not to be very careful for ourselves, but to run to our father in all our wants, and tell him what we stand in need of, and beg relief; and to be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer with supplication and thanksgiving to make known our requests to God, (*Phil.* iv. 6). And this acquiescence of the soul in the love of God, is it that keepeth our hearts and minds in that peace of God which passeth all understanding, so that the more of self-denial, the less is a man dependent on himself, or troubled with the cares of his own preservation; and the more doth he cast himself on God, and is careful to please him that is his true preserver, and then quieteth and resteth his mind in his all sufficiency, and infinite wisdom and love,

and so is a mere dependent upon God.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 347.

It much honoureth God when his servants can quietly and fearlessly trust in him, in the face of all the dangers and threatenings which devils or men can cast before them; and can joyfully suffer pain or death, in obedience to his commands, and in confidence on his promise of everlasting happiness.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 143.

The world is an inn, and the christian will be thankful if his way be fair, and if he have his daily bread; but it is not his home, nor doth he make any great matter, whether his usage in it be kind or unkind, or whether his inn be well adorned or not. He is almost indifferent whether for so short a time, he be rich or poor, in a high, or in a low condition, further than as it tendeth to his master's service. Let men see that you have a higher birth than they, and higher hopes, and higher hearts, by setting light by that which their hearts are set upon as *their* felicity. When *seeming* christians are as worldly and ambitious as others, and make as great a matter of their gain, and wealth, and honour, it sheweth that they do but cover the base and sordid spirit of worldlings, with the vizer of the christian name, to deceive themselves, and bring the faith of christians into scorn, and dishonour the holy name which they usurp.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 142.

By the spirit of adoption is meant, 1. That spirit, or those qualifications or workings in their souls, which the gospel of God giveth only to his sons. 2. And which raise in us some child-like affections to God, inclining us in all our wants to run to him in prayer, as to a father, and make our moan to him,

and open our griefs and cry for redress, and look to him, and depend on him as a child on the father. This spirit of adoption you may have, and yet not be certain of God's special love to you. The knowledge only of his general goodness and mercy, may be a means to raise in you true child-like affections. You may know God to have fatherly inclinations to you, and yet doubt whether he will use you as a child, for want of assurance of your own sincerity; and you may hope God is your father, when yet you may apprehend him to be a displeased father, and so he may be more your terror than your comfort. Are not you ready, in most of your fears, and doubts, and troubles, to go to God before all others for relief? And doth your heart sigh and groan to him, when you can scarcely speak? Doth not your troubled spirit there find it's vent? And say, Lord, kill me not; forsake me not; my life is in thy hands; O soften this hard heart; make this carnal mind more spiritual! O be not such a stranger to my soul! Woe to me, that I am so ignorant of thee! so disaffected to thee! so backward and disinclined to holy communion with thee! Woe to me, that I can take no more pleasure in thee! and am so mindless and disregardful of thee! O that thou would stir up in me more lively desires, and workings of my soul towards thee! and suffer me to lie at such a distance from thee.

Are not such as these the breathings of your spirit? Why these are child-like breathings after God! This is crying Abba, father. This is the work of the spirit of adoption, even when you fear God will cast you off. You much mistake (and those that tell you so) if you think that the spirit of adoption lieth only in a persuasion that you are God's child, or that you may not have the spirit of adoption, without such a persuasion of God's

adopting you. For God may adopt you, and give you that spirit which he gives only to his children, and possess you with true filial affections towards him, before ever you know yourself to be adopted; much more, though you may have frequent returning doubts of your adoption.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 856.

CHAP. V.—*God glorified in his Works.*

OUR *walking with God* is not only a sense of that common presence which he must needs afford to all, but it is also a believing apprehension of his gracious presence, as our God and reconciled father, with whom we dwell, being brought near unto him by Christ, and who dwelleth in us by his Spirit.

To *walk with God* (as here we are in flesh) includeth not only our believing his presence, but also that we see him (as the chief cause in the effects) in his creatures, and his daily providence, that we look not on creatures as independent or separated from God, but see them as the glass, and God as the represented face; and see them as the letters and words; and God as the sense of all the creatures that are the first book which he appointed man to read. We must behold his glory declared by the heavens, (*Psal. xix. 1*), and see him shining in the sun; and see his power in the fabrick of the world, and his wisdom in the admirable order of the whole: we must taste the sweetness of his love in the sweetness of our food, and in the comforts of our friends, and all our accommodations; we must see, and love his image in his holy ones, and we must hear his voice in the ministry of his messengers.

Thus *every creature* must become a *preacher* to us, and we must see the *name of God upon it*; and thus all things will be sanctified to us, while *holiness to the Lord* is written upon all. Tho' we must not therefore make idols of the creatures, because God appeareth to us in them, yet must we hear the *message* which they bring us, and reverence in them the *name* of the Creator which they bear.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 709.

Do you not know that all this earth is no bigger, in comparison of all the world, than one inch of ground is to all the earth? And how many thousand, thousand, thousand times, is all the earth greater than one inch? And are not all the rest of the vast and glorious parts of the world as like to be fully inhabited as this? How know you but those unmeasurable regions have a thousand, thousand millions of blessed angels and spiritual inhabitants, for *one wicked man or devil* that is damned? Are you sure it is not so? — *Works*, vol. iv. p. 190.

CHAP. VI.—*Gratitude to God.*

HE that will be false to God, whose interest in him is so absolute, is unlikely to be true to men, whose interest in him is infinitely less: he that can shake off the great obligations of creation, redemption, preservation and provision, which God layeth on him, is unlikely to be held by such slender obligations as he receives from men. I'll never trust that man far, if I know him, that's false to his

Redeemer: he that will sell his God, his Saviour, his soul, and heaven, for a little sensuality, vain-glory, or worldly wealth, I shall not wonder if he sell his best friend for a groat.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 713.

How much you are beholden to God, who hath made *you* by his grace to be one of those *few* that shall be saved.

How excellent a people those *few* should be, above the common rates of men, whom God hath called out of so great a number to himself. How fervently should they love him, and how holily and heartily should they serve him.

O that we could be such as this mercy doth deserve!—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 190.

CHAP. VII.—*Delighting in God.*

IN my younger years my trouble for sin, was most about my *actual failings* in *thought*, word or *action*, but now I am much more troubled for *inward defects*, and omission or want of the vital duties or graces in the soul. My daily trouble is so much for my *ignorance of God*, and weakness of *belief*, and want of greater *love to God*, and strangeness to longing to be with God in heaven, as that I take not some immoralities, though very great, to be in themselves so great and odious sins, if they could be found as separate from these. Had I all the riches of the world, how gladly should I give them, for a fuller knowledge, belief, and love of God and everlasting glory! These wants are the greatest burden of my life, which oft maketh my life itself

a burden. And I cannot find any hope of reaching so high in these, while I am in the flesh, as I once hoped before this time to have attained: which maketh me the wearier of this sinful world, which is honoured with so little of the knowledge of God.

I was once wont to meditate most on my own heart, and to dwell all at home, and look a little higher: I was still poring either on my sins or wants, or examining my sincerity; but now, though I am greatly convinced of the need of heart-acquaintance and employment, yet I see more need of a higher work, and that I should look oftener upon Christ, and God, and heaven, than upon my own heart. At home I can find distempers to trouble me, and some evidences of my peace: but it is above that I must find matter of delight, and joy, and love, and peace itself. Therefore I would have one thought at home upon *myself* and sins, and many thoughts above upon the high and amiable and beautifying objects.—*Life*, p. 129.

Behold him in the infinite perfections of his being; his omnipotence, omniscience, and his goodness, his holiness, eternity, immutability, &c. And as your eye delighteth in an excellent picture, or a comely buildings, or fields, or gardens, not because they are yours, but because they are a delectable object to the eye; so let your minds delight themselves in God considered in himself, as the only object of highest delight. Delight yourselves also in his relative attributes, in which is expressed his goodness to his creature; as his all-sufficiency, and faithfulness, or truth, his benignity, his mercy and compassion, and patience to sinners, and his justice unto all. Delight yourselves in him as his glory appeareth in his wondrous

works, of creation and daily providence. Delight yourself in him as he is related to you as your God and father, and as all your interest, hope and happiness is in him alone. Delight yourselves in him, as his excellencies shine forth in his blessed Son. And as they appear in the wisdom and goodness of his word, in all the precepts and promises of the gospel. (*Psal.* cxix. 162. *Jer.* xv. 16). Delight thyself in his image, though but imperfectly printed on thy soul; and also on his holy servants. (*Gal.* ii. 20; *1 Cor.* xv. 10; *2 Cor.* vii. 18). Delight yourself in the consideration of the glory that he hath from all his creatures, and the universal fulfilling of his will: and the prosperity and happiness of your friend delighteth you, and the success of any excellent enterprises, and the praise of excellent things and persons, and as you have a special delight in the success of truth, and the flourishing order, and unity, and peace, and prosperity of kingdoms, especially of the church, much more than in your personal prosperity (unless you have selfish, private, base, unmanly dispositions); so much more should you delight in the glory and happiness of God. Delight yourselves in the safety which you have in his favour and defence: and the treasure you have in his all-sufficiency and love, for your continual supplies in every want, and deliverance in every danger, and the ground of quiet contentedness and confidence which is offered to fearful souls in him. Delight yourselves in the particular discoveries of his common mercies to the world, and his special mercies to his saints; and his personal mercies to yourselves, from your birth to this moment: both upon your souls, and bodies, and friends, and name, and estates, and affairs in all relations. Delight yourselves in the privilege you enjoy of speaking to him, and of him, and

breathing from him, and adoring, and worshipping him, and singing, and publishing his praise, and in the communion which your souls may have with him through Christ, on his days, and at all times, in his sacraments and in all your lives. And say as Solomon, (1 *Kings*, viii. 27), And will God indeed dwell on earth? Will he dwell, and walk with sinful men, when the heaven of heavens cannot contain him?—*Psal.* xl. 16, Let those that seek him rejoice and be glad in him; and cxxii. 1, Let us be glad to go to the house of the Lord, and join with his holy assemblies in his worship—*Psal.* xlviii. 4, The streams of his grace make glad the city of God, the holy tabernacles of the most high: God is the midst of her, she shall not be moved. Delight yourselves above all, in the forethoughts and hope of the glory which you shall see and enjoy for ever.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 130.

If you are devoted to God, what do you do for him? Is it his business that you mind? How much of your time do you spend for him? How much of your speech is for him? How much of your estates yearly is serviceable to his interest? Let conscience speak whether he have your studies and affections; let your families be witnesses whether he have your speeches and best endeavours; let the church witness what you have done for it; and the poor witness what you have done for them; and the souls of ignorant and ungodly men what you have done for them: Shew by the work you have done, who you have lived to, God or your carnal selves. If indeed you have lived to God, something will be seen that you have done for him; nay, it is not a *something* that will serve the turn, it must be the *best*. Remember that it is by your works that you shall be judged, and not by your pretences,

professions or compliments; your judge already knows your case; he needs no witnesses; he will not be mocked with saying you are for him; shew it, or saying it will not serve.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 712.

It much honoureth God, when *the hopes of everlasting joys do cause believers to live much more joyfully than the most prospering worldlings*: not with their kind of doting mirth, in vain sports, and pleasures, and foolish talking, and uncomely jests; but in that constant cheerfulness, and gladness, which beseemeth the heirs of glory. Let it appear to the world, that indeed you hope to live with Christ, and to be equal with the angels: doth a dejected countenance, and a mournful, troubled, and complaining life, express such hopes? or rather tell men that your hopes are small, and that God is a hard master, and his service grievous? Do not this dishonour him by your inordinate dejectedness? Do not this affright and discourage sinners from the pleasantness of the service of God?—*Works*, vol. i. p. 143.

The kingdom of heaven consisteth in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost: and that the Spirit hath undertaken to be the comforter of believers, who is sent upon no low or needless work. Nor did Christ purchase his people's joys in vain, by the price of his grievous sufferings and sorrows. Having borne our griefs, and being made a man of sorrows, that we that see him not might rejoice in believing, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Nor is it in vain that he hath filled his word with such matter of delight and comfort, in the gladdest tidings that could come to man, and in such free, and full, and faithful promises. Nor hath he multiplied his commands for his rejoicing,

and delight in vain: again and again commanding us to rejoice, and always to rejoice. Nor is it insignificant that he hath forbidden those worldly cares, and fears, and griefs, which would devour their joys. Nor that he hath so clearly shewed them the way to joy, and blameth them, if they walketh not in it. He filleth up their lives with mercies and matter of delight by his direction, support, provision, and disposals; and all this in their way of trial, and in the valley of tears. How tender is he of their sufferings and sorrows: not afflicting willingly, nor delighting to grieve the sons of men? He taketh not away their delight and comfort, till they cast it away themselves, by sinning, or self-afflicting, or neglecting his proposed pleasures. He never faileth to meet them with his delights while they walk in the way prescribed to the end: unless when it tendeth to their greater pleasure, to have some present interruption of the pleasure.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 131.

CHAP. VIII.—*Walking with God.*

Set yourself more to the daily exercise of *divine praises* and thanksgiving, to actual *love* and *joy*, than to any other part of duty. Not that you have *done repenting*; but that these are the chief, the life, the top, the end of all the rest.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 182.

The question is not, what men *call themselves*, but what *they are*; not, whether you say you take *God for your God*, but *whether you do so indeed*; not, whether you *profess yourselves to be atheists*,

but whether you are *atheists indeed* or not. If you are not, look over what I have here said, and ask your consciences, do you walk with God? Who is it you submit yourselves willingly to be disposed of by? To whom are you most subject? And whose commands have the most effectual authority with you? Who is the *chief governor* of your hearts and lives? Whom is it that you *principally desire to please*? Whom do you most *fear*? and whose displeasure do you principally avoid? From whom is it that you expect your *greatest* reward? and in whom, and with whom do you place and expect your happiness? Whose work is it that you do, as the greatest business of your lives? Is it the goodness of God in himself, and unto you, that draweth up your hearts to him in love? Is he the ultimate end of the main intentions, design, and industry of your lives? Do you trust upon his word as your security for your everlasting hopes and happiness? Do you really live as in his presence? Do you delight in his word, and meditate on it? Do you love the communion of the saints? And to be most frequent and familiar with them that are most frequent and familiar with Christ? Do you favour more the *particular affectionate* discourse about his *nature, will, and kingdom*, than the frothy talk of empty wits, or the common discourse of carnal worldlings? Do you love to be employed in thanking him for his *mercies*, and in *praising* him, and declaring the glory of his attributes and works? Is your *dependence* on him as your great *benefactor*, and do you receive your mercies as his gifts?—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 713-14.

To despise earth is easy to me; but not so easy to be acquainted and conversant in heaven. I have nothing in this world which I could not easily let

go; but to get satisfying apprehensions of the other world is the great and grievous difficulty.

I am much more apprehensive than long ago, of the *odiousness* and danger of the sin of pride; scarce any sin appeareth more odious to me: having daily more acquaintance with the lamentable naughtiness and frailty of man, and of the mischiefs of that sin, and especially in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical: I think so far as any man is proud he is kin to the devil, and utterly a stranger to God and to himself; it's a wonder that it should be a *possible* sin, to men that still carry about with them, in a soul and body, such humbling matter of remedy as we all do.

I more than ever lament the unhappiness of the nobility, gentry, and great ones of the world, who live in such temptation to sensuality, curiosity, and wasting of their time about a multitude of little things, and whose lives are too often the transcript of the sins of *Sodom*; pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, and want of compassion to the poor. And I more value the life of the poor labouring man; but especially of him that hath neither poverty nor riches. I am much more sensible than heretofore of the breadth, and length, and depth of the radical, universal, odious sin of *selfishness*, and therefore have written so much against it; and of the excellency and necessity of *self-denial*, and of a public mind, and of loving our neighbour as ourselves.

I am more and more sensible, that most controversies have more need of *right stating* than of *debating*; and if my skill be increased in any thing, it is in that, in *narrowing* controversies by explication, and separating the *real* from the *verbal*, and proving to many contenders, that they differ less than they think they do.

I am more solicitous than I have been about my duty to God, and less solicitous about his *dealings* with me, as being assured that he will do all things well; and as acknowledging the goodness of all the declarations of his holiness, even in the punishment of man, and as knowing that there is no rest but in the will and goodness of God.—*Life and Time*, p. 134.

If God perceive thee either *taking thy pleasure* in thy *prosperity*, which thou shouldst take in him alone, or *hoping* at least that the *world* may hereafter prove more *amiable* and *delightful* to thee, the more he *loveth thee*, the more his *providence* shall conspire with his *grace*, to change thy mind, by depriving thee of thy unwholesome dangerous *delights*. Use the world as a traveller for the ends to which it was ordained, to the service of God, and the furtherance of thy salvation, and then thou shalt find that God will furnish thee with all that is necessary to these necessary ends; but if the world must have your *love and care*, and must be your chiefest *business and delight*, and your *excuse* for not attending upon God, murmur not, nor marvel not, if he dispose of it and you accordingly, if you are yet *too healthful* to think with *seriousness* on your eternal state; if you are *too rich* to part with all for Christ, or *openly to own his cause*; if you are *too much esteemed* in the world to own a scorned, slandered religion; if you are so busy for earth, that you cannot have time to think of heaven; if you have *so much delight in house or land*, or in your *employments, or recreations*, or friends, that God and godliness can have little or none of your *delight*: marvel not then if God do shake your *health*, or *waste your riches*, or turn your *honour into contempt*, and suffer men to slander

and reproach you, and spit in your face, and make you of no reputation: marvel not if he turn you out of all, or turn all to your grief and trouble, and make the world a desert to you, and the inhabitants as wolves and bears. It is sad that we should be so *foolish* and *unkind*, as to stay from God, as long as any preferments, or pleasures, or profits in the world, will entertain us; but seeing it is so, let us be thankful both to that *grace* and that providence which cureth us. Let this be the *issue* of all our sufferings, and all the cruelties and injuries of the world, to drive us home to *converse with God*, and to turn our *desires*, and *labours*, and *expectations*, to the *true felicity* that never will forsake us, and then the will of the Lord be done! Let him choose *his means*, if *this* may be the *end*; let us kiss the rod, and not revile it, if this may be the fruit of his corrections.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 741-2.

No wonder if the christian make lighter of the smiles or frowns of mortal man, than others do that see none higher; and if he observe not the lustre of worldly dignity or fleshly beauty, wisdom, or vain glory, before the transcendent incomprehensible light, to which the sun itself is darkness. *When he awaketh he is still with God*, (Psal. cxxxiv. 8). *He sets the Lord always before him, because he is at his right hand, he is not moved*, (Psal. xvi. 8). And therefore the life of believers is oft called *a walking with God*, and *a walking before God*, as (Gen. v. 22, 24, and vi. 9, and xvii. 1) in the case of *Enoch*, *Noah*, and *Abraham*. *All the day doth he wait on God*, (Psal. xxv. 5). Imagine yourselves what manner of person he must be that *sees the Lord*; and conclude that such (in his measure) is the true believer; for by *faith he seeth him*

that is invisible (to the eye of sense) and therefore can forsake the glory and pleasures of the world, and feareth not the wrath of princes, as it's said of *Moses*, (*Heb. xi. 27*).—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 517.

A passage well deserving attention on this subject, is to be found in—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 709.

O how few are the christians that are eminent in humility, meekness and self-denial, that are content to be accounted nothing, so that Christ may be all, and his honour may be secured; that live as men devoted to God, and honour him with their substance, and freely expend, yea, study for opportunities to improve all their riches and interest to his service! How few are they that live in heaven upon earth, with the world under their feet, and their hearts above with God their happiness? That feel themselves to live in the workings and warmth of love to God, and make him their delight, and are content with his approbation, whoever disapprove them! That are still groaning, and seeking after him, and long to be with him, to be rid of sin, and see his blessed face, and live in his perfect love and praises! That love and long for the appearance of Jesus Christ, and can heartily say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. How few are they that stand in a day of trial? If they are tired but with a foul word, if tried but with any thing that toucheth their commodity; if tried but with the emptiest reasonings of deceivers, much more if they be tried with the honours and greatness of the world, how few of them stand in trial, and do not fall and forget themselves, as if they were not the men that they seemed to be before! what then

would they prove if they were tried by the flames.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 944.

CHAP. IX.—*Knowledge of God.*

By knowing thy *self* and *God*, it is easy to know what primitive holiness and godliness is. Even hearty, entire, and absolute resignation of the soul to God, as the infinite power, wisdom and goodness, as our creator, our owner, governor, and felicity or end, fully submitting to his disposals, obeying his laws, in hope of his promised rewards, and fear of his threatened punishments, and loving and delighting in himself, and all his appearances in the world; and desiring and seeking the endless sight and enjoyment of him in heavenly glory; and expressing these affections in daily *prayer, thanksgiving and praise*. This is the use of all thy faculties, the end and business of thy life; the health and happiness of thy soul. This is that *holiness or godliness* which God doth so much call for.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 197.

Luke, xii. 47, Knowing God's will, and not doing it, prepareth men for *many stripes*. See *Rom.* ii.—And as barren knowledge is oft made the aggravation of sin, so true knowledge is usually made the cause or means of *love and obedience* (1 *John*, iv. 8). *He that loveth not, knoweth not God* (2 *Pet.* i. 2). *Grace and peace be multiplied to you, through the knowledge of God.* (2 *Pet.* ii. 20, 21), and many such like.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 543.

CHAP. X.—*Looking unto Jesus.*

TILL humiliation makes a sinner feel his sin and misery, it is not possible that Christ as Christ should be heartily welcome to him; or received in that sort as his honour doth expect. Who cares for the physician that feels no sickness, and fears not death? He may pass by the door of such a man, and he will not call him in; but when pain and fears of death are on him, he will send and seek, and bid him welcome. Will any man fly to Christ for succour, that feels not his wants and danger? Will they hold on him, as the only refuge of their souls, and cleave to him as their only hope, who feel no need of him? Will they lie at his feet, and beg for mercy, that feel themselves well enough without him? When men do but hear of sin and misery, and superficially believe it, they may coldly look after Christ and grace, and feel the worth of the latter, in such a manner as they feel the weight of the former. But never is Christ valued and sought after, as Christ, till sorrow hath taught us how to value him; nor is he entertained in the necessary honour of a Redeemer, till humiliation throw open all the doors; no man can seek him with his whole heart, that seeks him not with a broken heart.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 571.

It hindereth the soul's approach to God, when the *infinite distance* makes us think that God will not regard or take notice of such contemptible worms as we: we are ready to think that he is too high for our converse or delight. In this case the soul hath no such remedy, as to look to Christ; and see how the father hath regarded us, and set

his heart upon us, and sent his son to seek and save us; Oh! wonderful astonishing condescension of eternal love! believe that God assumed flesh to make himself familiar with man; and you can never question whether he regard us, or will hold communion with us. It hindereth our comfortable access to God, when we are deterred by the glory of his infiniteness and majesty: as the eye is not able to gaze upon the sun, unless it be overshadowed. So the soul is afraid of the majesty of God, and overwhelmed by it when it should be delighted in it. Against this, there is no such remedy as to behold God appearing to us in his son, where his majesty is veiled, and where he approacheth us familiarly in our nature, to invite us to himself with holy confidence, and reverent boldness. Christ did not appear in a terrible form; women durst discourse with him: beggars and cripples, and diseased people durst ask his help: sinners durst eat with him: the proud contemned him, but the lowly were not frightened from him. He took upon him the form of a servant, and made himself of no reputation, that he might converse familiarly with the meanest, and those of no reputation. Though we may not debase the godhead to imagine he is humbled in glory, as it was on earth, in the flesh of Christ; yet this condescension is unspeakable encouragement to the soul to come with boldness unto God that was frightened from him.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 58.

Alas! without Christ we know not how to live an hour; nor can have hope or peace in any thing we have or do; nor look with comfort either upward or downward, to God or the creature, nor think without terror of our sins, of God, or of the life to come. Resolve therefore, that as true converts,

you are wholly to live upon Jesus Christ, and to do all that you do by his spirit and strength; and to expect all your acceptance with God upon his account: where other men are reputed philosophers or wise, for some unsatisfactory knowledge of these transitory things, do you desire to know nothing but a crucified and glorified Christ: study him, and take him (objectively) for your wisdom: when other men have confidence in the flesh, and in the shew of wisdom, in will-worship, and humility, after the commandment and doctrines of men (*Col. ii. 20, 21, 22, 23*), and would establish their own righteousness, do you rejoice in Christ your righteousness; and set continually before your eyes, his doctrine and example as your rule. Look still to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith, who contemned all the glory of the world, and trampled upon its vanity, and subjected himself to a life of suffering, and made himself of no reputation but for the joy that was set before him; endured the cross, despised the shame, and underwent the contradiction of sinners against himself. Live so that you may truly say as Paul (*Gal. ii. 20*), I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. — *Works*, vol. i. p. 20.

Osirs, if a thought of your hearts, if a word of your mouths, have not some relation to Christ, suspect it, yea reject it. Call it not a sermon, or a prayer, or a duty, that hath nothing of Christ in it. Though the pure Godhead be your principal end, yet there is no way to this end but by Christ; and though love, which is exercised on that end, must animate all your graces and duties, as they are

means to that end; yet faith hath love in it, or else it is not the christian faith; and Christ is the object of your faith and love; and your perfect everlasting love will be animated by Christ; for your love and praise will be to him that was slain, and redeemed us to God by his blood out of every kindred, tongue, and nation, and made us kings and priests to God.—*Directions to a Sound Conversion*, p. 167.

Things that men highly value will be *remembered*; they will be matter of their freest and sweetest thoughts; this is a known case.

Do not those then make light of Christ, and salvation, that think of them so seldom and coldly in comparison of other things? Follow thy own heart, man, and observe what it daily runneth out after, and then judge whether it make not light of Christ.

We cannot persuade men to one hour's sober consideration what they should do for an interest in Christ, or in that thankfulness for his love, and yet they will not believe that they make light of him.

Things that we highly value will be matter of our discourse; the judgment and heart will command the tongue. Freely and delightfully will our speech run after them; this also is a known case.

Do not these men then make light of Christ and salvation that shun the mention of his name, unless it be in a vain or sinful use? Those that love not the company where Christ and salvation is much talked of, but think it troublesome precise discourse; that had rather hear some merry jests or idle tales, or talk of their riches or business in the world. When you may follow them from morning to night, and scarce have a savoury word of Christ; but perhaps some slight and weary men-

tion of him sometimes; judge whether these make not light of Christ and salvation. How seriously do they talk of the world! (*Psal. cxiv. 8, 11*). And speak vanity! But how heartlessly do they make mention of Christ and salvation!

The things that we highly value we would secure the possession of, and therefore would take any convenient course to have all doubts and fears about them well resolved. Do not those men then make light of Christ and salvation, that have lived twenty or thirty years in uncertainty whether they have any part in these or not, and yet never seek out for the right resolution of their doubts? Are all that hear me this day certain they shall be saved? Oh that they were! Oh, had you not made light of salvation, you could not so easily bear such doubtings of it; you could not rest till you had made it sure, or done your best to make it sure. Have you nobody to enquire of, that might help you in such a work? Why, you have ministers that are purposely appointed to that office. Have you gone to them, and told them the doubtfulness of your case, and asked their help in the judging of your condition? Alas, ministers may sit in their studies from one year to another, before ten persons among 1000 will come to them on such an errand! Do not these make light of Christ and salvation? When the gospel pierceth the heart indeed, they cry out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved!* (*Acts, xvi. 30; and ix. 6*). Trembling and astonished Paul cries out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* And so did the convinced Jews to Peter. (*Acts, ii. 37*). But when hear we such questions? —*Works, vol. iv. p. 734.*

Consider, 1. Thou makest light of him that made not light of thee, who didst deserve it. Thou

was worthy of nothing but contempt. As a man, what art thou but a worm to God? As a sinner thou art far viler than a toad: yet Christ was so far from making light of thee and thy happiness, that he came down in the flesh, and lived a state of suffering, and offered himself a sacrifice to the justice which thou hadst provoked, that thy miserable soul might have a remedy. It is no less than miracles of love and mercy that he hath shewed us: and yet shall we slight them after all?

Angels admire them, whom they less concern, (1 *Pet.* i. 12); and shall redeemed sinners make light of them? What barbarous, yea, devilish, yea, worse than devilish ingratitude is this? The devils never had a Saviour offered them, but thou hast, and dost thou yet make light of him?

2. Consider the work of man's salvation by Jesus Christ, is the masterpiece of all the works of God, wherein he would have his love and mercy magnified. As the creation declareth his goodness and power, so doth redemption his goodness and mercy; he hath contrived the very frame of his worship so, that it shall much consist in the magnifying of this work; and after all this, will you make light of it? His name is wonderful, (*Isa.* ix. 6). He did the work that none could do, (*John*, xv. 24). Greater love could none shew than his, (*John*, xv. 13). How great was the evil and misery that he delivered us from? The good procured for us? All are wonders, from his birth to his ascension, from our new birth to our glorification, all are wonders of matchless mercy: and yet do you make light of them!

3. You make light of matters of *greatest excellency and moment in the world*: you know not what it is that you slight: had you well known, you could not have done it. As Christ said to the woman of *Samaria*, (*John*, iv. 10), hadst thou known

who it is that speakest to thee, thou wouldst have asked of him the waters of life: had they *known*, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory, (1 Cor. ii. 8). So had you known what Christ is, you would not have made light of him; had you been one day in heaven, and but seen what they possess, and seen also what miserable souls must endure that are shut out, you would never sure have made so light of Christ again.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 735.

Depend in the constant exercise of faith and prayer upon the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, and seek to please God as your greatest pleasure, and so live by the faith of the Son of God, that you may say it is Christ that liveth in you, (*Gal.* ii. 19, 20). And then none can take you out of his hands, nor separate you from the love of God, (*Rom.* viii. 38, 39), nor take your chosen portion from you.

In a word, that your choice may be unchangeable, you must firmly trust to the unchangeable promise of the unchangeable God, for the unchangeable kingdom, as purchased by Christ, and our title sealed by his Spirit: the world and the flesh must be crucified, dead and buried to you by the virtue of his cross believed in, and you must be risen with him to a heavenly mind, and hope, and conversation: every weight must be laid by, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, (*Heb.* xii. 1). And we must not look back to the forsaken world behind us, but press forward for the prize unto the mark, (*Phil.* iii.), looking still to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame, and is set down at the right

hand of the throne of God: we must consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners, lest we be weary and faint: we must count nothing dear to us, that we may finish our course with joy; and must know by faith, *that our labour is not in vain in the Lord*, if we would be *stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*, (1 Cor. xv. 58). *We must serve God acceptably, with reverence, and godly fear*, as for a kingdom which cannot be moved; and all this in dependence on the grace of Christ, (Heb. xii. 28). Considerate men know by sense and experience, that this world is vanity and vexation: if we know also by a living constant faith, that a better world of holy joy is the near and certain portion of the faithful, it will fix the will in a resolved choice, and we shall not be like profane *Esau*, that sold his birth-right for one morsel; and the living eternal God will be eternally our life and joy, to whom all the blessed with Christ shall give glory and praise for ever. *Amen.*—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 704.

Oh, if it might stand with the will of God that I might chuse what effect this sermon should have upon your hearts, verily it should be nothing that should hurt you in the least: But this it should be, it should now be to fasten upon your souls, and pierce into your consciences, as an arrow that is drawn out of the quiver of God; it should follow thee home to thy house, and bring thee down on thy knees in secret, and make thee there lament thy case, and cry out in bitterness of thy spirit, Lord, I am a sinner that have neglected thee; I have tasted more sweetness in the world than in thy blood, and taken more pleasure in my earthly labours and delights than I have done in praying to thee, or meditating on thee; I have

complimented thee with a cold profession, but my heart was never set upon thee: and here should it make thee lie in tears and prayers, and follow Christ with thy cries and complaints, till he should take thee up from the dust, and assure thee of his pardon, and change thy heart, and close it with his own. If thou were ~~the~~ dearest friend that I have in the world, this is the success that I would wish this sermon with thy soul, that it might be as a voice still sounding in thine ears, that when thou art next in thy sinful company or delight, thou mightest as it were hear this voice in thy conscience, *is this thine obedience to him that bought thee?* That when thou art next forgetting Christ, and neglecting his worship in secret, or in thy family, or publick, thou mightest see this sentence as it were written upon thy wall, *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and thou perish:* That thou mightest see it, as it were, written upon the tester of thy bed as oft as thou liest down in an unregenerate state; and that it may keep thy eyes waking, and thy soul disquieted, and give thee no rest, till thou hadst rest in Christ. In a word, if it were but as much in my hands as it is in yours, what should become of this sermon, I hope it would be the best sermon to thee that ever thou heardest: it should lay thee at the feet of Christ, and leave thee in his arms: Oh, that I did but know what arguments would persuade you, and what words would work thy heart hereto: if I were sure it would prevail, I would come down from the pulpit, and go from man to man upon my knees with this request and advice in my text; *O kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish.*—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 727.

CHAP. XI.—*Prayer.*

In holy, faithful, fervent prayer, a christian hath very much of his converse with God; for *prayer* is our approach to God, and calling to mind his presence and his attributes, and exercising all his graces in a holy motion towards him, and an exciting all the powers of our souls to seek him, attend him, and reverently to worship him: it is our treating with him about the most important businesses in the world, a begging of the greatest mercies, and a deprecating his most grievous judgments; and all this with the nearest familiarity that man in flesh can have with God. So that the soul that is most and best at prayer, is most and best at walking with God, and hath most communion with him in the Spirit; and to withdraw from *prayer*, is to withdraw from God. When we are commanded to *pray*, it includeth a command to *repent*, and *believe*, and *fear the Lord*, and desire his grace. For *faith* and *repentance*, and *fear* and *desire*, are altogether in action in a serious prayer; and, as it were, naturally each one takes his place, and there is a *holy order* in the acting of these graces in a christian's prayers, and a harmony which he doth seldom himself observe. He that in *meditation* knoweth not how to be regular and methodical, when he is studiously contriving and endeavouring it, yet in *prayer* before he is aware, hath *repentance*, and *faith*, and *fear*, and *desire*, and every grace fall in its proper place and order, and constitute its part to the performance of the work. The *new nature* of a christian is more immediately and vigorously operative in *prayer*, than in many other duties; and therefore every infant in the

family of God can *pray*, (with groaning *desires*, and ordered graces, if not with well-ordered words). When *Paul* began to *live* to Christ, he began (aright) to *pray*. *Behold he prayeth*, saith God to *Ananias*, (Acts, ix. 11); *and because they are sons, God sends the Spirit of his Son into the hearts of his elect, even the spirit of adoption*, by which they cry *Abba, father*, (Gal. iv. 6), as *children naturally* cry to their *parents* for relief. And *nature* is more regular in its works than art or human contrivance is. Necessity teaches many a beggar to pray better for relief to men, than many learned men (that feel not their necessities) can pray to God. The Spirit of God is a better methodist than we are. And though I know that we are bound to use our utmost care and skill for the *orderly actuating* of each holy *affection* in our *prayers*, and not pretend the sufficiency of the Spirit for the patronage of our negligence or sloth, (for the Spirit makes use of our understandings for the actuating of our wills and affections); yet withal it cannot be denied, but that it was upon a special reason that the Spirit that is promised to believers, is called a *spirit of grace and supplication*, (Zech. xii. 10). And that it is given us to *help our infirmities*, even the infirmities of our *understanding*, when *we know not what to pray for as we ought*, (Rom. viii. 26.) And that the Spirit itself is said to *make intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered*.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 710, 711.

Think not *thrice* or *continued* praying to be too much, or that importunity is in vain, (Luke, xviii. 1). *Christ spake a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not wax faint*. Whether God deliver us or not, prayer is not lost; it is a good posture for God to find us in; we may get better if

we get not what we ask. Obey and pray, and trust God.

But what answer doth the Lord give to *Paul's* thrice praying? He said, *My grace is sufficient for thee, and my strength is manifested in weakness.*

1. It was not a promise that the *thorn should depart.*

2. It seems to be rather a denial at the present, and that *Paul* must not be yet cured of his thorn; for it is called a *weakness* that must continue for the manifesting of God's strength: and what was the sufficiency of grace and strength for, but to endure the thorn?

3. But this promised grace and strength is better than that which was desired.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 917.

Besides many more common objects of prayer which many writers as well as Baxter tell us the real christian may be sure of receiving, he adds, these are very reasonably to be expected; the use of bibles, the benefit of a faithful minister, sacraments, christian society, time of preparation for a comfortable death, &c.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 832.

Let great men have a double interest in your prayers. They have a double need of grace and help, and we have a double need that they should be gracious. O think how hard it is to save their faith, their innocency and their souls, and to save the gospel and the public peace in the midst of so many and great temptations. And therefore pray hard, where prayer is so needful.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 478.

Labour when you are about to pray, to stir up in your souls the most lively and serious belief of those unseen things, that your prayers have respect

to; and to pray as if you saw them all the while: even as if you saw God in his glory, and saw heaven and hell, the glorified and the damned, and Jesus Christ your mediator interceding for you in the heavens. As you would pray if your eyes beheld all these, so strive to pray while you believe them; and say to yourselves, Are they not as sure as if I saw them? Are they not made known by the Son and Spirit of God?

Labour for a constant acquaintance with yourselves, your sins and manifold wants, and necessities, and also to take an actual special notice of your case, when you go to prayer.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 459.

Prayer is the breath of the new creation. The spirit of adoption given to every child of God, is a spirit of prayer, and teacheth them to cry, “Abba, father,” and helpeth their infirmities, when they know not what to pray for as they ought.

The first workings of grace are in desires after grace, provoking the soul to fervent prayer, by which more grace is speedily obtained. — Ask then, and ye shall have, seek and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened to you. (*Luke*, xi. 9).—*Works*, vol. i.

Little do we know how we wrong ourselves, by shutting out of our prayers the praises of God, or allowing them so narrow a room as we usually do, while we are copious enough in our confessions and petitions. *Reader*, I entreat thee, remember this; let praises have a larger room in thy duties; keep matter ready at hand to feed thy praise, as well as matter for confession and petition. To this end, study the excellencies and goodness of the Lord, as frequently as thy own wants and unworthiness;

the mercies thou hast received, and those which are promised, as often as the sins thou hast committed. "Praise is comely for the upright." "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth God." "Praise ye the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant." (*Psal.* xxxiii. 1; l. 23; cxxxv. 3). "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. (*Heb.* xiii. 15). Had not David a most heavenly spirit, who was so much in this most heavenly work? Doth it not sometimes raise our hearts, when we only read the song of Moses, and the Psalms of David? How much more would it raise and refresh us, to be skilful and frequent in the work ourselves? O the madness of youth, that lay out their vigour of body and mind upon vain delights and fleshly lusts, which is so fit for the noblest work of man! And O the sinful folly of many of the saints, who drench their spirits in continual sadness, and waste their days in complaints and groans, and so make themselves, both in body and mind, unfit for this sweet and heavenly work! Instead of joining with the people of God in his praises, they are questioning their worthiness, and studying their miseries; and so rob God of his glory, and themselves of their consolation. But the greatest destroyer of our comfort in this duty, is our taking up with the tune and melody, and suffering the heart to be idle, which ought to perform the principal part of the work, and use the melody to revive and exhilarate itself.—*Saints' Rest*, ps 263.

Desire first, and pray next; and remember that desire is the soul of prayer.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 651.

The desire of increase of grace, and higher

measures, is an unspeakable mercy; for the desire of perfection is the mark of sincerity, and so of salvation.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 833.

A desire of holiness is heart-prayer.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 827.

An hypocrite that hath no other *religion* but delusory and vain, may observe *weaknesses* of persons that are of *lower education* and *parts*, and may *loath their indiscretion*, in conference and behaviour, and their *unhandsome expressions* in prayer and other duties, and shake the head at them, as silly, contemptible, self-conceited fellows; and his heart may rise against their disorder, tautologies and affectations: and it's like enough, that hereupon he will jest at *conceived prayer*, or *extemporate* (as they call it) and bless himself as safe in his parrot-like devotions, because the *same spirit* teacheth not fine words, and rhetorical language to all that it teacheth to *pray with unutterable sighs and groans*, (*Rom. viii. 26, 27*), though the *searcher of hearts* (who is not delighted with compliments, and set speeches) doth well understand the *meaning of the Spirit*.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 448.

Go to God in all affliction, but not with carnal discouraged hearts. He maketh you thus feel the need of his mercy, that you may with the prodigal think of home, and cry for mercy, and abuse it no more. Christ did not blame the blind and lame for crying out, *Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on us*; nor the *Canaanite* woman for begging for the crumbs: is any afflicted, let him pray, and send for the elders' prayers. The *thorn* in the flesh will make us feel, and feeling will teach us to repent and pray, and prayer is the means of hope for the

deliverance of body and soul ; grace maketh us not stupid, yet there are some that think a man behaveth not himself like a believer if he cry and pray that the thorn may depart ! What think they of *David*, in *Psal.* vi. and xvii. and lxxxviii., and many more ? What think they of Christ that prayed, that if possible the cup might pass by him ? He did it to shew that even *innocent nature* is averse to suffering, and death through grace makes us submit to the will of God ; (we continue men when we are believers), we must mourn with them that mourn, and yet not love others better than ourselves ; nor feel their thorns more sensibly than our own. We must neither despise chastenings nor faint.

But how doth *Paul* pray ? Doth he make any great matter of his thorns ? *he besough the Lord thrice, that it might depart.*—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 916.



CHAP. XII.—*Public Worship.*

Look into our congregations, and judge but by their very looks, and carriage, and gestures, how many even of those that we think the best, do so much as seems to be earnest and serious in prayer and praise, when the church is upon that work ! Though it be the highest and noblest part of worship, and should be done with all the heart and might, and with a participation of a kind of angelical reverence, devotion, and spirituality ; and if it were so, we should see it by some of the sighs of reverence and affection ; yet, alas ! when we think the best of them should be striving with God, or wrapt up in his praises, they do but hear us pray,

as they hear us preach, and think they have done well to give us the hearing. They sit on their seats in prayer, or use some crooked leaning gesture, perhaps looking up and down about them; perhaps half asleep; but few of them with eyes and hands and hearts lift up to heaven, do behave themselves as though they believed they had not so nearly to do with God. I know reverent gestures may easily be counterfeited, but that shews that they are good, when hypocrites think them a fit cover for hypocrisy, for they use not to borrow credit from evil, but from some good to be a cover to the evil; and it leaveth the neglects of the godly more unexcusable, when they will not go so far herein as hypocrites themselves, nor by their behaviour in a public ordinance, so much as seems to be seriously employed with God.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 943.

We are very apt to think those affections to be purely spiritual, which in the issue appear to be mixed with carnality. Our very love to the assemblies and ordinances of worship, and to ministers and other servants of the Lord; to books and knowledge, are ordinarily mixt, and good and bad are strangely complicate, and twisted together in the same affections and works. And the love that begins in the spirit is apt to degenerate into carnal love, and to have too much respect to riches, or honour, or personage, or birth, or particular concerns of our own, and so it is corrupted, as wine that is turned into vinegar, before we are aware. And though still there be uprightness of heart, yet too much hypocrisy is joined with it, when it is little perceived or suspected.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 817.

CHAP. XIII.—*Reading the Scriptures.*

IGNORANCE is your disease, and knowledge must be your cure. I know the ignorant have many excuses, and are apt to think that the case is not so bad with them as we make it to be; and that there is no such need of knowledge, but a man may be saved without it. But this is because they want that knowledge that should shew them the misery of their ignorance, and the worth of knowledge. Hath not the scriptures plainly told you, that "If the gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, whose minds the God of this world hath blinded, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them?" (2 Cor. iii. 4). I know that many that have much knowledge are ungodly; but what of that? Can any man therefore, be godly, or be saved without knowledge? You may have a bad servant, that yet is skilful enough in his work, but yet you will not mend the matter by taking one that hath no skill at all. You may send a man on your errand that knows the way, and yet will not go it, but loiter and deceive you. But what of that? Will you therefore think to mend the matter by sending one that knows not a step of the way, nor will not learn it? Though a man of knowledge may be a servant of the devil, yet no man without knowledge (that hath the use of his reason) can be the servant of God. A man may go to hell with knowledge; but he certainly shall go to hell without it. — *Direc. to a Sound Conversion, p. 18.*

Bethink you well, if God should but send a book or letter to you, how reverently you would

receive it! How carefully you would peruse it, and regard it beyond all the books in the world! and how rather should you do so, by that book which is indited by the Holy Ghost, and recordeth the doctrine of Christ himself, whose authority is greater than all the Angels!—*Works*, vol. i. p. 453.

Remember that the scripture is the will and testament of your Lord, and the covenant of most full and gracious promises, which all your comforts, and all your hopes of pardon and everlasting life are built upon. Read therefore with love and great delight. Value it a thousandfold more than you would do the letters of your dearest friend, or the deeds by which you hold your lands; or anything else of low concernment. If the law were sweeter to David than honey, and better than thousands of gold and silver, and was his delight and meditations all the day, Oh! what should the sweet and precious gospel be to us?—*Works*, vol. i. p. 453.

If you be not satisfied in the doctrine which the minister delivers unto you, first search the scriptures yourselves, and if that will not do, go to him and desire him to shew you his grounds for it in the word of God, and join with you in prayer for a right understanding of it. Do you question whether there be so severe a judgment, and a heaven, and a hell, as ministers tell you? Search the scriptures, (*Matt.* xxv. and *2 Thes.* i. 8, 9, 10; *Joh.* v. 29; *Matt.* 13). Do you question whether a man may be saved without conversion, regeneration and holiness? Open your bibles, and see what God saith, (*Joh.* iii. 3, 6; *Matt.* xviii. 3; *2 Cor.* v. 17; *Rom.* viii. 9; *Heb.* xii. 14). Do you think a man may be saved without knowledge? Let scripture

judge, (2 *Cor.* iii. 4; *Joh.* xvii. 3; *Hos.* iv. 6). Do you think a man may be saved that doth as most do, and goeth in the common way of the world? Search the scriptures and see, (*Matt.* vii. 13, and xx. 16, and xxii. 14; *Luke.* xii. 32). Do you think an unhumiliated soul may be saved that never was contrite and broken-hearted for sin? Try by *Isaiah*, lvii. 15, and lxvi. 2; *Psal.* li. 17; *Luke.* iv. 18.; *Matt.* xi. 28. Do you think a man can be the servant of God, and live a fleshly life and will keep his sin? Try by *Rom.* viii. 13; *Joh.* iii. 12; *Eph.* v. 5, 6; 1 *John*, iii. 9, 10. Do you doubt whether it be necessary to make so much ado about being saved, and be so strict, and make religion our chiefest business? Try by *Psal.* i. 1, 2, 3; 1 *Pet.* iv. 18; *Heb.* xii. 14; *Luke.* x. 42; *Luke.* xiii. 24; *Eph.* v. 15, 16. Do you think a man can be saved that is a worldling, whose heart is more on earth than in heaven? Try by 1 *Joh.* ii. 15; *Phil.* iii. 19; *Col.* iii. 1; *Luke.* xiv. 26, 33. Do you doubt whether you should serve God with your families, and instruct them, and pray with them? Try by *Jos.* 24, 15; *Deut.* vi. 6, 7; *Dan.* vi. 10, 11; *Exod.* xx. 10. —*Works*, vol. ii. p. 558.

CHAP. XIV.—*Meditation and Consideration.*

DWELL on the believing forethoughts of the everlasting glory which you possess. Think what it is that others are enjoying while you are here; and what you must *be*, and *possess*, and *do* for ever. Daily think of the certainty, perfection, and perpetuity of your blessedness. What a life it will be, to see the blessed God in his glory, and taste

of the fullness of his love, and to see the glorified Son of God, and with a perfected soul and body, to be perfectly taken up in the love, and joy, and praises of the Lord, among all his holy saints and angels, in the heavenly *Jerusalem*. You must by the exercise of faith and love, in holy meditation and prayer, even dwell in the Spirit, and converse in heaven, while your bodies are on earth, if you would entertain the news of death as befits a christian.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 404.

To this end, you must know in their several degrees, what subjects are in themselves most excellent to be meditated on. As the first and highest is the most blessed God himself, and the most glorious person of our Redeemer, and the New Jerusalem, or heaven of glory where he is revealed to his saints; and the blessed society which there enjoyeth him, and the holy vision, love, and joy, by which he is enjoyed; and mixt is the wonderful work of man's redemption, and the covenant of grace, and the sanctifying operations of the Holy Ghost, and all the graces that make up God's image on the soul. And then is the state and privileges of the church, which is the body of Christ, for whom all this is done and prepared. And next is, the work of the gospel by which this church is gathered, edified, and saved; and then the matter of our own salvation, and our state of grace, and way to life; and then the salvation of others; and then the common public good, in temporal respects; and then our personal bodily welfare; and next the bodily welfare of our neighbours; and lastly, those things that do but remotely tend to these. This is the order of desirableness and worth, which will tell you what should have estimative precedency in your thoughts and prayers.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 244.

Be not too seldom in solitary meditation ; though it be a duty which melancholy persons are disabled to perform, in any set, and long, and orderly manner ; yet it is so needful to those who are able, that the greatest works of faith are to be managed by it.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 553.

Baxter has with great propriety cautioned melancholy tempers not to indulge in solitary meditation, as they are unable to bear it ; but recommends their busying themselves in the more active duties of life.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 764.

O that these *drowsie* and those *waking* nights, those loitered, lost, and empty hours, had been spent in the humblest converse with Him, which have been dreamed and doted away upon.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 763.

He wanteth neither work nor pleasure, that in his solitude is taken up in the believing contemplations of eternal love, and of all his blessed attributes and works. O then what happy and delightful converse may a believer have with God alone ! He is always present, and always at leisure to be spoken with, and always willing of our access and audience. He hath no interest cross to our felicity, which should move him to reject us (as worldly great ones often have). He never misunderstandeth us, nor chargeth that upon us which we were never guilty of.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 754.

Many I have known that have been greatly troubled, because they could not bring themselves to that length or order of meditation, for which they had neither ability nor time.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 833.

Turn your cogitations often in soliloquies, methodically and earnestly preaching to your own hearts, as you would do on that subject to others if it were to save their souls. As this will keep you in order, from rambling and running out, and will also find you continual matter (for method is a wonderful help both to invention, memory, and delight); so it will bring things sooner to your affections.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 245.

Turn your meditations often into ejaculatory prayers, and addresses unto God; for that will keep you reverent, serious, and awake, and make all the more powerful, because the more divine.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 245.

Obeys all that God revealeth to you in your meditations, and turn them all into faithful practice, and make not thinking the end of thinking.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 246.

I value above all, things according to their *use* and *ends*; and I find in the daily practice and experience of my soul, that the knowledge of God and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the truth of scripture, and the life to come, and of a holy life, is of *more use* to me, than all the most curious speculations. I know that every man must grow (as trees do) downwards and upwards at once; and that the *roots* increase as the bulk and branches do. Being nearer death and another world, I am the more regardful of those things which my everlasting life or death depend on. Having most to do with ignorant miserable people, I am commanded by my charity and reason, to treat with them of that which their salvation lieth on; and not to dispute with them of formalities and niceties, when

the question is presently to be determined, whether they shall dwell for ever in heaven or in hell. In a word, my *meditations* must be upon the matters of my practice and my interest; and as the love of God, and the seeking of everlasting life is the matter of my *practice* and my *interest*, so must it be of my meditation. That is the *best* doctrine and study which maketh men *better*, and tendeth to make them *happy*. I abhor the folly of those unlearned persons, who revile or despise learning because they know not what it is; and I take not any piece of true learning to be useless: and yet my soul approveth of the resolution of holy *Paul*, who determined to know nothing among his hearers, that is, comparatively, to value and make ostentation of no other wisdom, but the knowledge of a crucified Christ; to know God in Christ is life eternal. As the stock of the tree affordeth timber to build houses and cities, when the small though higher multifarious branches are but to make a crow's nest or a blaze: so the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, of heaven and holiness, doth build up the soul to endless blessedness, and affordeth it solid peace and comfort; when a multitude of school niceties serve but for vain janglings, and hurtful diversions and contentions: and yet I would not dissuade my readers from the perusal of *Aquinas*, *Scotus*, *Ockam*, *Arminiensis*, *Durandus*, or any such writer, for much good may be gotten from them; but I would persuade him to study and live upon the essential doctrines of christianity and godliness, incomparably above them all. And that he may know that my testimony is somewhat regardable, I presume to say that in this I as much gainsay my natural inclination to subtilty and accurateness in knowing, as he is like to do by his, if he obey my counsel. And I think if he lived

among infidels and enemies of Christ, he would find that to make good the *doctrine of faith*, and of *life eternal*, were not only his noblest and most useful study, but also that which would require the height of all his parts, and the utmost of his diligence, to manage it skilfully to the satisfaction of himself and others. I see that the Holy Ghost in another manner is the witness of Christ, and his agent in the world: the spirit in the prophets was his first witness; and the spirit by miracles was the second; and the spirit by renovation, sanctification, illumination, and consolation, assimilating the soul to Christ and heaven, is the continued witness to all true believers: and if any man have not the spirit of Christ, the same is none of his, (*Rom. viii. 9*).—*Life*, p. 128.

Urgent and oppressing business doth almost necessitate the thoughts. Therefore avoid as much as you can such energies when you would be free for meditation. Let your thoughts have as much diverting matter as may be, at those times when you would have them entire, and free for God.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 243.

Are we reasonable in this, or are we not? Hath the eternal God provided us such glory, and promised to take us up to dwell with himself, and is not this worth thinking on? Should not the strongest desires of our hearts lie after it? Do we believe this, and yet forget and neglect it? If God will not give us leave to approach this light, what means all his earnest invitations? Why doth he so condemn our earthly mindedness, and command us to set our affections on things above?

If God says love not the world, nor the things of the world, we dote upon it. How freely, how fre-

quently can we think of our pleasures, our friends, our labours, our flesh, and its lusts, yea, our wrongs and miseries, our fears and sufferings? But where is the christian whose heart is on his rest? I require thee, reader, as ever thou hopest for a part in this glory, that thou presently take thy heart to task, chide it for its wilful strangeness to God, turn thy thoughts from the pursuit of vanity, bend thy soul to study eternity, busy it about the life to come, habituate thyself to such contemplations, and let not those thoughts be seldom and cursory, but bathe thy soul in heaven's delights; and if thy backward soul begin to flag, and thy thoughts to scatter, call them back, hold them to their work, bear not with their laziness, nor connive at one neglect. And when thou hast, in obedience to God, tried this work, got acquainted with it, and kept a guard on thy thoughts till they are accustomed to obey, thou wilt then find thyself in the suburbs of heaven, and that there is indeed a sweetness in the work and way of God, and that the life of christianity is a life of joy.—*Saints' Rest*, p. 216, 217, 218.

When others are ready, like Baal's priests, to cut themselves because their sacrifice will not burn; thou mayest breathe the spirit of Elijah, and in the chariot of contemplation soar aloft, till thy soul and sacrifice gloriously flame, though the flesh and the world should cast upon them all the water of their opposing enmity. Say not, how can mortal ascend to heaven? Faith hath wings, and meditation is its chariot.—*Saints' Rest*, p. 228.

Consideration is a duty that you may perform if you will. You cannot say that it is wholly out of your power; so that you are left inexcusable if you

will not be persuaded to it. You say you cannot convert yourselves, but cannot you set yourselves to consider your ways, and bethink you of those truths that must be the instruments of your conversion? Your thoughts are partly at the command of your will; you can turn them up and down from one thing to another. Even an unsanctified minister, that has no saving relish for spiritual things, can think of them, and spend most of his time in thinking on them, that he may preach them to others: and why cannot you then turn your thoughts to them for yourselves? You can think of house, and land, and friends, and trading, and of any thing that aileth you, or any thing that you want, or any thing that you love or think would do you good; and why cannot you think of your sin, and danger of God, and of his word and works, and the state of your souls, and everlasting life? Are you not able to go sometimes by yourselves, and consider of these matters? Are you not able when you are alone in your beds, or as you travel in the way, or at your labour, to bethink how things stand with your souls? Why are you not able? What is it that could hinder you, if you were but willing?—*Works*, vol. i. p. 563.

It is not improper to illustrate a little the manner in which we have described this duty of meditation, or the considering and contemplating of spiritual things. It is confessed to be a duty by all, but practically denied by most. Many that make conscience of other duties, easily neglect this; they are troubled if they omit a sermon, a fast, or a prayer in public or private; yet were never troubled that they have omitted meditation perhaps all their lifetime to this very day; though it be that duty by which all other duties are improved, and by

which the soul digesteth truths for its nourishment and comfort. It was God's command to Joshua, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shall meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein, (*Josh. i. 8*). As digestion turns food into chyle, and blood, for vigorous health; so meditation turns the truths received and remembered into warm affection, firm resolution, and holy conversation.

This meditation is the acting of all the powers of the soul. It is the work of the living, and not of the dead. It is a work of all others the most spirited and sublime, and therefore not to be well performed by a heart that is merely carnal and earthly. They must necessarily have some relation to heaven, before they can familiarly converse there. I suppose them to be such as have a title to rest, when I persuade them to rejoice in the meditations of rest. And supposing thee to be a christian, I am now exhorting thee to be an active christian. And it is the work of the soul I am setting thee to, for bodily exercise doth here profit but little. And it must have all the powers of the soul, to distinguish it from the common meditations of students; for the understanding is not the whole soul, and therefore cannot do the whole work.

It is the mistake of christians, to think that meditation is only the work of the understanding and memory; when every school-boy can do this, or persons that hate the things which they think on. So that you see there is more to be done, than barely to remember and think of heaven; as some labours not only stir a hand, a foot, but exercise the whole body, so doth meditation the whole soul. As the affections of sinners are set on the world, are turned to idols and fallen from God, as well as

their understandings; so must their affections be reduced to God, as well as the understanding; and as their whole soul was filled with sin before, so the whole must be filled with God now. See David's description of the blessed man, "His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night." *Psal. i. 2.*

Now, though I would persuade you to that which is mixed with your common labours, and also that which special occasions direct you to; yet I would have you likewise make it a constant standing duty, as you do by hearing, praying, and reading the scriptures; and no more intermix other matters with it, than you would with prayer or other stated solemnities.

The Lord's day is exceeding seasonable for this exercise. When should we more seasonably contemplate on rest, than on that day of rest which typifies it to us? It being a day appropriated to spiritual duties, methinks, we should never exclude this duty, which is so eminently spiritual. I verily think this is the chief work of a christian Sabbath, and most agreeable to the design of its positive institution. What fitter time to converse with our Lord, than on the Lord's day? What fitter day to ascend to heaven, than on that which he arose from earth, and fully triumphed over death and hell? The fittest temper for a true christian, is, like John, to be in the Spirit on the Lord's day. (*Rev. i. 10.*) And what can bring us to joy in the Spirit, but the spiritual beholding of our approaching glory? Take notice of this, you that spend the Lord's day only in public worship; your allowing no time to private duty, and therefore neglecting this spiritual duty of meditation, is very hurtful to your souls. You also that have time on the Lord's day for idleness, and vain discourse, were you but acquainted with

this duty of contemplation, you would need no other pastime; you would think the longest day short enough, and be sorry that the night hath shortened your pleasure. *Christians*, let heaven have more share in your sabbaths, where you must shortly keep your everlasting sabbath.—*Saints' Rest*, p. 269, &c.

Be sure to fix with a serious faith upon the invisible glory as your portion; and then look at all things in this world, as good or bad, as they respect your end: and judge of them as they help or hinder you in the main.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 440.

Think much and seriously on the great and certain things which first converted and resolved your wills: they are the same, and as good now as they were then, and you should know them better. A man that loveth and chuseth rationally, knoweth why he doth it: and the fixing and renewing of your knowledge and belief, is it that must fix your love and choice.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 704.

Use often to set yourself purposely at seasonable hours (as you are able) to meditate on the heavenly glory, and though we must form no image in our minds of God himself, but think of him as an infinite Spirit, infinitely *powerful, wise and good*; yet we may, and must think by the help of *imagination, of the glorified human nature of Christ*, and the glorious state of heaven itself. And as intuitively we here know our own souls in act, our vitality, understanding and wills; so by knowing ourselves, we may know in part what God, and Angels, and holy souls are. And as our bodies shall be glorified, so we may have answerable apprehensions of them; and where we may not think of imagined glories, (as of

the light of the sun, or shining bodies) as if the glory of spirits were just the same, yet we may think of them as resemblances or similitudes; (1 Cor. iii. 11, 12; 2 Cor. iii. 8). As the New Jerusalem is described, (*Rev.* xxi. and xxii.) And from the sense and thoughts of all the delights of man on earth, we may aggravate the unconceivable joys of heaven. Set therefore oft before your eyes, the *certainty*, the *nearness*, the *greatness* of that *glory*; think how many millions of holy souls are there in joy, while we are here in fears and cares; think of the excellent servants of God who have passed thither through a world of trials, and were lately compassed with such infirmities as ours, and passed through death, as we must do; remember that we go not an untrodden path, but are followers of all the spirits of the just; think how much better it is with them than with us; how they are freed from all our sins and sufferings, doubts and fears. O think what it is for a perfected holy soul, to see the glorified Redeemer, and all the holy company of saints and angels; yea, to see the glory of God himself, and to have the knowledge of all his glorious works; to feel his love poured out unto us, and to be wrapt up in loving and praising him for ever, in the most transcendant joy and pleasure of the soul. Think of your holy acquaintance that are gone before you, and frequently fetch as it were a walk in the streets of the city of God: suppose you saw their glory, and heard their concordant praises of their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Let these kind of thoughts be so oft and serious, that they may be your daily work and pleasure, and the daily conversation of your minds with God above.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 226.

See that your meditations and belief be practical,

and brought close to the heart; and take not bare *thinking of* God and heaven as enough, but know that holy thoughts fall short of their use and end, if they come not to the heart and life.

It is not the speculative disputing christian that hath the fixed will and choice, unless he be also a hearty practising experienced christian: he that hath a heavenly heart and conversation, and hath felt the power and sweetness of things spiritual, will hold them fast, when bare hearsay and opinion will let them go.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 704.

If ever thou wouldst be saved, *oppress not reason by sensuality or diversions*, but sometimes (*Psal.* iv. 4; *Hag.* i. 5; *Deut.* xxxii. 7, 29), *retire for sober consideration*. Distracted and sleepy reason is unuseful; God and conscience have a great deal to say to thee, which in a crowd of company and business thou art not fit to hear. It is a (*Isa.* i. 3), doleful case, that a man who hath a *God*, a *Christ*, a *soul*, a *heaven*, a *hell* to think of, will allow them none but *running thoughts*, and not once in a week bestow *one hour* in manlike *serious* (*Job.* xxxiv. 27; *Jer.* xxiii. 20; *Psal.* cix. 59) *consideration* of them! Sure thou hast no greater things to mind! Resolve then sometimes to spend half an hour in the deepest thoughts of thy everlasting state.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 198.

Let your first and chief labour be every day about your heart; stir up your soul when you find it sluggish. Learn how to *preach to it* in your meditations, and (*Psal.* xlii. 5, 11; and xliii. 5) to *chide it*, and urge it to it's work.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 192.

In thy meditations, in all the incentives of love, preach them over earnestly to thy heart, and expostulate and plead with it by way of soliloquy, till thou

feel the fire begin to burn. There is more in this than most christians are aware of, or use to practise. It is a great part of a christian's skill and duty to be a good preacher to himself.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 125.

Is not that man *actually mad already*, who hath a God to serve, and a soul to save, and a heaven to get, and a hell to escape, and a death to prepare for, and spends his life in worldly (*Luke*, xii. 20; *Psal.* xiv. 1; and xcii. 6; *Jer.* xvii. 11; *Prov.* xiv. 9; *Eccl.* v. 1, 4; *Luke*, xxiv. 25) fooleries that all perish in the using, and leaveth all this work undone? Is he not mad, and worse than mad, that setteth more by these trifles than by his God? But when men have *reason* for *trifles*, and none for their *salvation*, and are wise in nothing but unprofitable vanities, and cunning to cheat themselves out of all their hopes of heaven, and go to hell with ease and honour; God bless us from such wit as this!—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 148.

If you would not have the work of conversion miscarry, my advice is this:

See that ye be much in the serious consideration of the truths which you understand between God and you in secret.

The greatest matters in the world will not work much upon him that will not think upon them. Consideration opens the ear that was stopt, and the heart that was shut up; it sets the powers of the soul a-work, and awakens it from the sleep of incogitancy and security. The thoughts are the first actings of the soul, and set a-work all the rest. Thinking on matters that must make us wise, and do the work of God on the heart, is that which lieth on us to do in order to our conversion. By consideration a sinner makes use of the truth, which

before lay by, and therefore could do nothing. By consideration he takes in the medicines to his soul, which before stood by and could do no work. By consideration a man makes use of his reason, which before was laid asleep, and therefore could not do its work. When the master's from home, the scholars will be at play. When the coachman is asleep, the horses may miss the way, and possibly break his neck and their own. If the ploughman goes away, the oxen will stand still, or make but bad unhandsome work. So when reason is laid asleep, and out of the way, what may not the appetites do? And what may not the passions do? And what may not temptations do with the soul? A wise man, when he is asleep, has as little use of his reason as a fool. A learned man, when he is asleep, cannot dispute with an unlearned man that is awake. A strong man that is very skilful at his weapons, is scarce able when asleep to deal with the weakest child that is awake. Why all the powers of your soul are as it were asleep, till consideration awake them and set them to work; and what are you the better for being man and having reason, if you have not the use of your reason when you need it? As men are inconsiderate because they are wicked, so they are the more wicked because they are inconsiderate. The keenest sword, the greatest cannon, will do no execution against an enemy, while they lie by and are not used. There is a mighty power in the word of God, and the example of Christ to pull down strongholds, and conquer the strongest lusts and corruptions. But they will not do this while they are forgotten and neglected. Will heaven entice the man that thinks not of it? Will hell deter the man that thinks not of it? Why is it that all the reasoning in the world will do no more good on a man that is deaf, than if you said nothing? But because the

passage to his thoughts and understanding is blockt up. And if you have eyes and see not, and ears and hear not, and wilfully cast it out of your thoughts, what good can any thing do you that is spoken?—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 559, 567.

CHAP. XV.—*Repentance.*

SECT. 1.—*Necessity of Repentance.*

SUPPOSE you met a man riding post towards *York*, and thinketh verily he is in the way to *London*, and tells you, I ride for life, and must be at *London* at night; you tell him that he must turn back again then, for he is going the quite contrary way, and the further he goeth, the further he hath to go back again: he answereth you, alas, I hope I have not lost all this time and travel; I hope I may come this way to *London*. Will not you tell him that his hopes will deceive him; there is no hope of coming to *London* that way, but he must needs turn back? And if he answer you, *you would drive me to despair; I will hope well and go on.* What would you say to this man? Would you not take him for a fool? And tell him, if you will not believe me, ask somebody else, and know better before you go on any further.

There is nothing more hindereth men from repentance and being saved, than hoping to be saved without true repentance, for who will ever turn to God, that still hopeth to be saved in the worldly ungodly way that he is in? Who will turn back again, that hopeth he is right and safe already?—(*Jam.* iii. 40; *Ezek.* xxxiii. 9, 11, 49; and xviii. 21, 30, 32; and xiv. 6).—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 150.

SECT. 2.—*Humiliation.*

I had doubts, because my grief and humiliation was no greater, and because I could weep no more for this.

But I understood at last that God breaketh not all men's hearts alike, and that the gradual proceedings of his grace might be one cause, and my nature not apt to weep for *other* things, another; and that the change of our heart from sin to God, is true repentance, and a loathing of ourselves is true humiliation! And that he that had rather leave his sin, than have leave to keep it, and had rather be the most holy, than have leave to be unholy, or less holy, is neither without true repentance, nor the love of God.—*Life*, p. 7.

One use of humiliation, is to fit the soul for its approach to God himself, from whom it had revolted. As it beseems not any creature to approach the God of heaven, but in reverential humility, so it beseems not any sinner to approach him but in contrite humility: who can come out of such wickedness and misery, and not bring along with him the sense of it on his heart? It beseemeth not a prodigal to meet his father as confidently and boldly, as if he had never departed from him; but to say, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, (*Luke*, xv. 18). It is not ingenuous for a guilty soul, or one that is snatcht as a brand out of the fire, to look towards God with a brazen face, but with shame and sorrow to hang down his head, and smite upon his breast and say, God be merciful to me, a miserable sinner. For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble, (1 *Pet.*

v. 5; *Jam.* iv. 6). Though the Lord be high, yet he hath regard unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off, (*Psal.* cxxxviii. 6). For thus saith the high and holy one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, and I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of an humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones, (*Isa.* lvii. 15). To this man will I look, even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word, (*Isa.* lxvi. 2). The Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit, (*Psal.* xxxiv. 18). The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God thou wilt not despise, (*Psal.* li. 17). There is no turning to God, unless we loath ourselves for all our abominations, (*Ezek.* xvi. 63).—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 572.

SECT. 3.—*Proofs of Repentance.*

Being in expectation of death, by a violent cough, with spitting of blood, &c. of two years continuance, supposed to be a deep degree of a consumption, I was yet more awakened to be serious and solicitous about my soul's everlasting state: and I came so short of that sense and seriousness, which a matter of such infinite weight required, that I was in many years doubt of my sincerity, and thought I had no spiritual life at all. I wondered at the senseless hardness of my heart, that could think and talk of sin, and hell, and Christ and Grace, of God and heaven, with no more feeling: I cried out from day to day to God for grace against the senseless deadness; I called myself the *most* hard-hearted sinner, that could feel nothing of all that I knew and talked of; I was not

then sensible of the incomparable excellency of holy love and delight in God, nor much employed in thanksgiving and praise. But all my groans were for more contrition and a broken heart, and I prayed most for tears and tenderness.—*Life and Time*, p. 5.

It is true, that if you truly repent, you are forgiven; but it is as true, that true repentance is the first conversion of the soul from sin to God, and leaveth not any man in the power of sin. It is not for a man, when he hath had all the pleasure that sin will yield him, to wish then he had not committed it (which he may do then at an easy rate), and yet to keep the rest that are still pleasant and profitable to his flesh. If thou have true repentance, it hath so far turned thy heart from sin, that thou wouldst not commit it, if it were to do again, tho' thou hast all the same temptations; and it hath so far turned thy heart to God and holiness, that thou wouldst live a holy life, if it were all to do again, though thou hadst all the same temptations as afore against it, because thou hast not the same heart. This is the nature of true repentance; such a repentance indeed is never too late to save; but I am sure it never comes too soon.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 6, 7.

Repentance hath its anger, its hatred, and its revenge; I am truly angry with my heart that hath so oft and foolishly offended thee; methinks I hate that heart that is so cold and backward in thy love, and almost grudge it a dwelling in my breast.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 763.

They follow much the temperature of the body, and some have much grief and many tears, that

have little or no grace, and some want them that have much grace. *The work of repentance consisteth in loathing and falling out with ourselves, for our sins, and in forsaking them with abhorrence, and turning unto God.*—*Works*, vol. i. p. 163.

And hereupon they take more pains with themselves to affect their hearts with sorrow for sin, and to wring out tears, than they do for many greater duties; but when God calleth them to love him, and to praise him, and to be thankful for his mercies, or to love every enemy, or forgive a wrong; when he calleth them to mortify their earthly mindedness, their sensuality, their pride, their passion, or their disobedience, they yield but little to his call, and shew him much greater hardness of heart, and yet little complain of this, or take notice it.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 163.

SECT. 4.—*Must be Particular.*

If you fall into any sin, rise speedily to sincere repentance; and take heed both of a delay, and of a palliate cure, (*Luke*, xiii. 3, 5; and xxii. 32.

Take heed of trusting to a general repentance, or a converted state, instead of a particular repentance, and conversion from any known sin, especially which is more than the ordinary unavoidable infirmities of a saint. For it is not general repentance indeed which reacheth not to every known particular. If temptation have cast you down, take heed of lying there, but speedily get up again: what the apostle saith of wrath, (*Eph.* iv. 26), the same I may say of other falls; let not the sun go down upon them: but go out with Peter and weep with him, if you have sinned with him. If your bones be out of joint, or broken, get them set pre-

sently, before they settle in their dislocation; and let the cure be thorough, and spare not for a little pain at first: let as open confession as the case requireth, and as full restitution, signify the sincerity of your repentance: for a gentle handling of yourselves may undo you; and palliation is the hypocrite's cure. O take heed, lest you presume to sleep one night in your unrepented sin, and take heed, lest delay encourage the tempter to offer you the bait again and again, and to say, why not once more? why may you not be as well pardoned for twice as for once; and for thrice as for twice, &c.? It's dangerous playing or sleeping at the brink of hell. Away from the temptation and occasion of your sin; stand not disputing, but resolve and be gone; and sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you, (*John*, v. 14). Stick not, man, at the shame, or loss, or sufferings which confessions, restitution or reformation may bring; but remember that you can never escape damnation at too dear a rate. This is Christ's meaning when he speaks of cutting off a right hand, or plucking out a right eye, if it offend; that is, ensnare and tempt you to sin, (*Matt.* v. 29, 30). Not that you should do so indeed, for you have an easier way to avoid the sin; but that, this is far the lesser of the two evils, to lose a hand or eye, than lose the soul, and therefore to be chosen if there were no other remedy: If the thief had no other way to forbear stealing than to cut off his hands; or the fornicator to cure his lust, than to put out his eyes, it were a cheap remedy. A cheap and easy superficial repentance may skin over the sore, and deceive the hypocrite; but he that would be sure of pardon, and free from fear, must go to the bottom.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 961.

SECT. 5.—*Confession.*

Humiliation consisteth expressively in the outward action, when opportunity is offered: and it is not true in the heart, if it refuse to appear without, when God require it in your ordinary course. The outward acts of humiliation are these: 1. a voluntary confession of sin to God and to man, when God requireth it; and that is, when it is necessary to his honour, to the healing of them that we have endangered, and satisfying the offended; at least in the hearing of men, in such cases as these to confess them openly to God; an unhumbled soul will refuse this for the shame; but the humble will freely take shame to themselves, and warn their brethren, and justify God, and give him the glory, (1 *John*, i. 9). If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. Read *Mark*, iii. 6; *Levit.* v. 5; and xvi. 21, and xxvi. 40; *Numb.* v. 6, 7; *James*, v. 16. “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed,” (*Prov.* xxviii. 13). “He that hideth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy.” Not that any man is to confess his secret sins to others, except in cases that he cannot otherwise find relief: nor that a man is to publish those offences of his own, by which he may further dishonour God and hinder the gospel: but when the sin is open already, and especially when the offence of others, the hardening of the wicked, the satisfaction of the church concerning our repentance, do require our confession and open lamentation; the humble soul both must and will submit to it; but the rotten hearted, unhumbled hypocrite will

A mistake to be carefully avoided, is, the placing of your humiliation, either only, or principally, in the passionate part, or in the outward expression of those passions. I mean, either in pinching grief, and in sorrow of heart, or else in tears. But you must remember that the life of it is, in the judgment and the will. It is not the measure of passionate sorrow and anguish, that will best shew the measure of your sincere humiliation; much less is it your tears, or your outward expressions. But it is your low esteem of yourselves, and contentedness to be vile in the eyes of others; and your displacency with yourselves, and willingness to mourn and weep for sin, as much as God would have you, with the rest of the acts of the judgment and will.

Two great dangers are here before you to be avoided. First, some there be that have terrible pangs of sorrow, and are ready to tear their own hair, yea, to make away with themselves as Judas, in the horror of their consciences; and these may seem to have true godly sorrow, and yet have none. And some can weep abundantly at a sermon, or in a prayer, or in mentioning their sin to others, and therefore think they are truly humbled, and yet it may be nothing so. For if at the same time their hearts are in love with sin, or had rather keep it than let it go, or have not an habitual hatred to it, and a predominant superlative love to God, their humiliation is no saving work. That which is in the passions and tears, may be even forced against your wills; and it signifies scarce so much as a common grace, where you are not willing of it. Many a one can weep through a passionate, womanish tender nature, and yet not only remain unhumbled, but proud in a high degree. How many such do we ordinarily see; especially women that

can weep more at a duty or conference, than some that are truly broken hearted could do in all their lives; and yet so far from being vile in their own eyes, and willing to be so in the eyes of others, that they will hate and reproach and rail at those that charge them with the faults that they seemed to lament, or at least that charge them with disgraceful sins; and they will excuse and mince their sins, and make a small matter of them, and love none so well as those that have high thoughts of them. So that pride doth ordinarily reign in their hearts, and break out in their words and lives, and make them hate the faithfullest reprovers, and live in contention with any that dishonour them, for all the tears that come from their eyes. Judge not therefore by passions, or tears alone, but by the judgment and the will as aforesaid.

Another sort there are, much better and happier than the former, that yet to their great trouble are mistaken in this point; and that is, they think they have no true humiliation, because they find not such pangs of sorrow, and freedom of tears, as others have, whereas their hearts are contrite, even when they cannot weep a tear. Tell me but this; are you vile in your own eyes, because you are guilty of sin, and that against the Lord whom you dearly love? Do you loath your sins, because of your abominations, and could you heartily wish, that you had been suffering when you were sinning? And if it were to do again, would you choose to suffer rather than sin; have you a desire to grieve, when you cannot passionately grieve, and a desire to weep, when you cannot weep? Can you quietly bear it when you are vilified by others, because you know yourselves to be so vile? And are you thankful to a plain reprove, though he tell you of the most disgraceful sin? Do you think

meanly of your own sayings and doings, and think better of others, where there is any ground, than of yourself? Do you justify God's afflictions, and men's true rebukes, and think yourselves unworthy of the communion of saints, or to see their faces, and unworthy to live on the face of the earth? Yea, would you justify if he should condemn you? This is the state of an humbled soul. Find but this, and you need not doubt of God's acceptance, though you were unable to shed a tear. There is more humiliation in a base esteem of ourselves, than in a thousand tears; and more in a will, or desire to weep for sin, than in tears that come through force of terror, or moisture of the brain, or passionate tenderness of nature; if the will be right you need not fear. It is he that most hateth sin, and is hardliest drawn to it, that is trueliest humbled for it. He that will lament it to day, and commit it to morrow, is far less humbled and penitent, than he that would not be drawn to it with the hopes of all the pleasure in the world, nor commit it, if it were to save his life.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 572.

How often have I heard a common drunkard, with tears cry out against himself for his sin, and yet go on in it? And how many gracious persons have I known, whose judgments and wills have been groundedly resolved for God and holiness, and their lives have been holy, fruitful, and obedient, and yet could not shed a tear for sin, nor feel any great sorrows or joys? If you judge of a man by his earnestness in some good moods, and not by the constant tenor of his life, you will think many an hypocrite to be better than most saints.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 997.

CHAP. XVI.—*Self-examination.*

I HAVE proved, from the word of God, by what infallible signs an ungodly man may know that he is ungodly if he will: may you not know whether it be thus with you, if you are willing to know? May you not know if you will, whether your desire and designs of life, be more for this world, or that to come? And whether heaven and earth be preferred and sought first? And whether your fleshly prosperity and pleasure, or your souls, be principally cared for and regarded? May you not know it if you will, whether you love or loath the serious worshippers of God? And whether you had rather be delivered from your sins, or keep them? And whether your wills be more against them, or for them? And whether you love a holy life or not? And whether you had rather be perfect in holiness and obedience to God, or be excused from it, and please the flesh? And whether you had rather be such a one as Paul, or as Cæsar? A persecuted saint in poverty and contempt, or a persecuting conqueror or king? May you not know if you will, whether you love a searching ministry, that telleth you of the worst, and would not deceive you? May you not know whether you are resolvedly devoted and given up to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as your father and felicity, your Saviour and Sanctifier; and whether the scope, design, and business, is more for God than for the flesh, for heaven or earth; and which is it that bears the sway? And which is it that comes behind, and hath but the leavings of the other, or only so much as it can spare? Certainly these are things so

near you, and so remarkable in your hearts, that you may come to the knowledge of them if you will. But if you will not, who can help it?—*Works*, vol. i. p. 12.

When we have attained the clearest sight of our sincerity, we little think how quickly all such apprehensions may be lost; and the misjudging soul, that reckons upon nothing but what it sees, or feels at present, may be at as great a loss, as if it had never perceived any fruit of the spirit, or lineaments of the image of God upon itself. How confident upon good ground, is many a heart of its sincerity? How certain that it desireth to be perfectly holy? 1. That it would be rid of the nearest and dearest sin. 2. That it loves the saints. 3. That it loves the light of the most searching ministry. 4. And loveth the most practical sanctifying truths. 5. And love the ministry and means that have the most and greatest tendency to make themselves more holy (all which are certain evidences of sincerity). How clearly may the heart perceive all these, and write them down; and yet ere long have lost the sight and sense of them all, and find itself in darkness and confusion, and perhaps be persuaded that all is contrary with them.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 813.

He that consenteth to learn, will learn, and he that consenteth to obey, will obey: your life must also testify the truth of your consent (*Tit.* i. 16; *Jam.* ii. 14; and *Matt.* xxi. 31, 32, 33). Therefore, instead of over tedious trying and fearing whether you truly consent and obey or not—set yourself heartily to your duty; study to please God, and to live fruitfully in good works; resolve more against those sins which make you question your

sincerity, and the practice of a godly life; and the increase of your grace will be a constant discernible evidence; and you will have the witness in yourself that you are the son of God. But take care that Satan do not tempt you to *security*, and tell you that now you are converted, all is *sure*, and you never need to fear any more. Those that have true grace, can never lose it; and sins once pardoned, are never unpardoned again, and therefore now all your danger is past. And if he can thus take off all your *fear* and *care*, he will quickly take off your zeal and diligence.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 182.

If you are not your *own*, remember that nothing else is your *own*; what can be more your own than yourselves?

1. Your parts and abilities of mind and body are not your own, use them therefore for him that owneth them.

2. Your authority and dignities are not your own, see therefore that you make the best of them for him that lent them you.

3. Your children themselves are not your own; design them for the utmost of his service that trusts you with them, educate them in that way as they may be most serviceable to God. It is the great wickedness of too many of our gentry, that they prepare their posterity only to live plenteously, and in credit in the world, but not to be serviceable to God or the commonwealth. Design them all that are capable to magistracy or ministry, or some useful way of life; and whatever be their employment, endeavour to possess them with the fear of the Lord, that they may devote themselves to him. Think not the preaching of the gospel a work too low for the sons of the noblest person in the land.

It would be an excellent furtherance to the work of the gospel, if noblemen and gentlemen would addict those sons to the ministry that are fit for it, and can be spared from the magistracy: they might have more respect from their people, and easier rule them, and might better win them with bounty than poor men can do. They need not to contend with them for tythes or maintenance.

4. If you are not your *own*, your whole families are not your *own*: use them therefore as families that are dedicated to God.

5. If you are not your *own*, then your wealth is not your *own*: honour God therefore with your substance, and with the first fruits of your increase, (*Prov.* iii. 9). Do you ask how? Is there no poor people that want the faithful preaching of the gospel for want of means, or other furtherance? Is there no godly scholars that want means to maintain them at the universities, to fit them for this work? Is there no poor neighbours about you that are ignorant, that if you buy them bibles and catechisms, and hire them to learn them, might come to knowledge and to life? Are there no poor children that you might set apprentices to godly masters, where soul and body might both have helps? The poor you have always with you. It is not for want of objects for your charity; if you hide your talents, or consume them on yourselves, the time is coming when it will do you more good to have laid them out to your master's use, than in pampering your flesh.

Some grudge that God should have the tenths; that is, that they should be consecrated to the maintenance of his service: but little do they consider that *all* is *his*, and must *all* be accounted for. Some question, whether now there be such a sin as sacrilege in being: But little do they consider that

every sin is a kind of sacrilege. When you dedicated yourself to God, you dedicated all you had; and it was God's before, do not take it from him again: remember the halving of *Annaias*, and give God all.

Objection. But must we not provide for our families?

Answer. Yea, because God requires it, and in so doing you render it to him: That is given to him, which is expended in obedience to him, so be it you still prefer his most eminent interest.

Lastly, If you are not your *own*, then must not your works be principally for yourselves, but for him that *owneth* you. As the scope of your lives must be to the honour of your Lord, so be sure that you hourly renew these intentions; when you set your foot out of your doors, ask whether your business you go upon be for God: when you go to your rest, examine yourselves what you have done that day for God; especially let no opportunity over-slip you, wherein you may do him extraordinary service. You must so perform the very labours of your callings, that they may be ultimately for God: so love your dearest friends and enjoyments, that it be God that is principally loved in them.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 717.

CHAP. XVII.—*Humility.*

There is a preparatory humiliation that goes before a saving change, which is not to be despised, because it is a drawing nearer unto God, though it be not a faithful closure with him. This prepara-

tory humiliation, which many have that perish, doth chiefly consist in these things following.

1. It lieth most in the fear of being damned; as it is most in the passions, so most in this of fear. 2. It consisteth also in some apprehension of the greatness of our sins, and the wrath of God, that hangs over our heads, and the danger that we are in, of being damned for ever. 3. It consisteth also in some apprehensions of the folly that we are guilty of in sinning, and of some repentings that ever we did it, and some remorse of conscience for it. 4. Hereto may be joined some passions of sorrow, and this expressed by groans and tears. 5. And all this may be accompanied by confessions of sin to God and man, and lamentations for our misery, and in some it proceeds to desperation itself. 6. And lastly, it may proceed to an indignation against ourselves, and to the taking of a severe revenge on ourselves, yea, more than God would have men take; as Judas did by self-destroying. This desperation and self execution are no parts of the preparatory humiliation; but the excess and error of it, and entrance upon hell.

An humble soul is truly willing to grieve for the sins which he hath committed, and to be as deeply sensible of them, and afflicted for them, as God would have him. Even when he cannot shed a tear, yet his will is to shed them. When he cannot feel any deep afflicting of his soul for sin, his heart's desire is, that he might feel it. He doth an hundred times weep in desire, when he doth not in act.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 558.

The humility, and meekness, and patience, of christians, much honour God and their holy faith: as pride, and passion, and impatience dishonour him. Let men see that the Spirit of God doth

cast down the devilish sin of pride, and maketh you like your master, that humbled himself to assume our flesh, and to the death of the cross, and to the contradiction and reproach of foolish sinners, and made himself of no reputation, but endured the shame of being derided, spit upon, and crucified, (*Phil.* ii. 7, 8, 9; *Heb.* xii. 2), and stooped to wash the feet of his disciples. It is not stoutness, and lifting up the head, and standing upon your terms, and upon your honour in the world, that is the honouring of God. When you are as little children, and as nothing in your own eyes, and seek not the honour that is of men, but say, not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy name be the glory, (*Psal.* cxv. 1), and are content that your honour decrease and be trodden into the earth, that his may increase, and his name be magnified: this is the glorifying of God. So when you shew the world, that you are above the impotent passions of men; not to be insensible, but to be angry and sin not, and to give place to wrath, and not to resist and avenge yourselves, (*Rom.* xii. 19); and to be meek and lowly at heart, (*Matt.* xi. 29); it will appear that you have the wisdom which is from above, if you be first poor, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality, and hypocrisy, (*James*, iii. 17).—*Works*, vol. i. p. 143.



CHAP. XVIII.—*Self-Denial.*

A CONFIRMED christian is one that taketh self-denial for the one half of his religion; and there-

fore hath bestowed one half of his endeavours to attain and exercise it. He knoweth that the fall of man was a turning to himself from God; and that selfishness, and want of love to God, are the sum of all corruption and ungodliness, and that the love of God and self-denial are the sum of all religion; and that conversion is nothing but the turning of the heart from carnal self to God by Christ: and therefore on this hath his care and labour been successfully laid out, that he hath truly and practically found out something that is much better than himself, and to be loved and preferred before himself, and which is to be his chiefest ultimate end. He maketh not a God of himself any more, but useth himself for God, to fulfil his will as a creature of his own, that hath no other end and use. He no more preferreth himself above all the world, but esteemeth himself a poor and despicable part of the world; and highlier valueth the honour of God, and the welfare of the church, and the good of many, than any interest of his own.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 972.

Many a civil ingenious gentleman, and other persons, will forbear the disgraceful sins of drunkenness, filthy speaking, whoredom, incivility, notorious profaneness, even because they are *disgraceful*, and therefore are against the interest of *self*; so much as *self* can possibly spare, a carnal heart may be brought to part with; but still *self* is alive and predominant with them; still it is the ruling end and principle.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 352.

Such as a man's principal end is, such is the man, and such is the course of his life. He that takes this world for his portion, and makes the felicity of it his end, is a carnal, worldly, unsane-

tified man, whatever good and godly actions may come in upon the by. It is he, and only he, that is a sanctified believer, who looks on heaven as his only portion, and his sailing through the troubled seas of this world, of purpose to come to that desired harbour; not loving these seats better than the land of rest, which he is sailing to, but patiently and painfully passing through them, because there is no other way to glory. And it is the desire of the land to which he is sailing, that moveth the mariner or passenger to do all that he doth in his voyage; and the desire of his home or journey's end, that moveth the traveller all the way; and the desire of a perfect building that moveth the builder in every stroke of his work; so it must be the love of God, and the desire of everlasting blessedness, that must be the very engine to move the rest of the affections and endeavours of the saints, and must make men resolve on the necessary labour and patience of believers. Take off this weight, and all the motions of christianity will cease. No man will be at labour and sufferings for nothing, if he can avoid them. It is a life of labour, though sweet to the spirit, yet tedious to the flesh, which christianity doth engage us in; and there is much suffering to be undergone; and this is to the very last, and to the denial of ourselves; and if God require it, to the loss of all the comforts of the world; for no less than forsaking all that we have, will serve to make us Christ's disciples.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 589.

CHAP. XIX.—*Holiness.*

THE life of grace lieth, 1. In the preferring of God and heaven, and holiness, in the estimation of our minds before all worldly things; 2. In the choosing them, and resolving for them with our wills, before all others; 3. In the seeking of them in the bent and drift of our endeavours. These three make up a state of holiness.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 163.

To be heartily devoted to God as his own, is the form of sanctification; and to live as God's own, is the truly holy life.—*On Self-Denial*, *Works*, vol. iii. p. 345.

When the threatening and punishment only can prevail with men, and men love not God and godliness for themselves, but had rather have liberty to live as the ungodly, I shall never take one of these for a sanctified man, nor have any hope of the saving such a soul, how far so ever his fears may carry him from his outward sins, or to outward duties, till God shall give him a better conversion than this; I say, I have not the smallest hope of this man's salvation. Then you are God's children, when the honour, the work, the family, the name of your father, are lovely and delightful to you: and when you grieve that there is any remnant of sin in your souls, and when your sins are to you as lameness to the lame, that pains them every step they go, and sickness to the sick, that makes them groan, and groan again, and long to be rid of it; and when you think those the happiest men on earth that are the most holy, and wish from your heart that you were such as they, though

you had not a house to put your head in : when you look towards God with longing thoughts, and are grieved that your understandings can reach no nearer him, and know no more of him, and that your hearts do not embrace him with a more burning love : when you admire the beauty of a meek, a patient, a mortified, spiritual, heavenly mind, and long to have more of this yourself, yea, to be perfect in all holiness and obedience : when your hearts are thus brought over to God, and that you had rather have him than any other, and rather live in his family any where, and rather walk in his ways than in any ; then are you indeed converted, and never till then, whatever other dispositions you may have.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 592.

If you are contented with that measure of holiness that you have, you have none at all, but a shadow and conceit of it. Let those men think of this, that stint themselves in holiness, and plead for a moderation in it, as if it were intemperance or fury to love God or fear him, or seek him, or obey him, any more than they do ; or as if we were in danger of excess in these. If ever these men had feelingly, and by experience, known what holiness is, they would never have been possessed with such conceits as these.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 936.

As the excellency of the work doth honour the workman, so must your graces and lives honour God. You have the souls of the weak to confirm by your lives. You should all be preachers, and even preach as you go up and down in the world, as a candle lighteth which way so ever it goeth. As we are sent to save sinners, as ambassadors of Christ, by public proclamation of his will, so are you sent to save them as his servants and our helpers, and must preach by your lives and fami-

liar exhortations, as we must do by authoritative instruction. A good life is a good sermon, yea, those may be won by your sermons, that will not come to ours, or will not obey the doctrines which they hear. Even to women that must keep silence in the church, doth Peter command this way of preaching, (1 *Pet.* iii. 1, 2) ; that if any of them have husbands that obey not the word, they may without the word be won by the conversation of their wives. Thousands can understand the meaning of a good life, that cannot understand the meaning of a good sermon! By this way you may preach to men of all languages, though your tongues had never learnt but one. For a holy, harmless, humble life, doth speak in all the languages of the world, to men that have eyes to read it. This is the universal character and language, in which all sorts may perceive you speak the wondrous works of the Holy Ghost. I charge you therefore, christians, deprive not God of the honour you owe to him, nor the church or souls of wicked men, of this excellent and powerful help which you owe them, by continuing in your weakness and unsettled minds and spotted lives; but grow up to that measure that may be fit for such a work. As you durst not silence the preachers of the gospel, so do not dare to silence yourselves from preaching by your holy and exemplary lives. And alas! do you think that feeble, giddy, scandalous professors, are likely to do any great matters by their lives! Would you wish the poor world to write after such a crooked and blotted copy? Will it win men's hearts to a love of holiness, to talk with a christian that can scarce speak a word of sense for his religion? Or to see a professor as greedy of a little gain as the veriest worldling that hath no other hope? Or to hear them rail, lie, or slander? Or to see them turn up and down like a

weather-cock, according as the wind of temptation fits? And to follow every new opinion that is but put off with a plausible fervency, do you think that men are like to be won by such lives as these?—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 939.

A soul that doth not set its affections on things above, disobeys the commands, and loses the most gracious and delightful discoveries of the word of God. The same God that hath commanded thee to believe, and to be a christian, hath commanded thee to seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, and to set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth, (*Col.* iii. 1, 2). The same God that hath forbidden thee to murder, steal, or commit adultery, hath forbidden thee the neglect of this great duty; and darest thou wilfully disobey him? Why not make conscience of one, as well as the other? He hath made it thy duty as well as the means of thy comfort, that a double bond may engage thee not to forsake thy own mercies. Besides, what are all the most glorious descriptions of heaven, all those discoveries of our future blessedness, and precious promises of our rest, but lost to thee? Are not these the stars in the firmament of scripture, and the golden lines in that book of God? Methinks thou shouldst not part with one of those promises, no, not for a world. As heaven is the perfection of all our mercies, so the promises of it in the gospel, are the very soul of the gospel. It is a comfortable word from the mouth of God, of such worth, that all the comforts of the world are nothing to it. And dost thou neglect and overlook so many of them? Why should God reveal so much of his counsel, and tell us beforehand of the joys we shall possess, but to make us know it for our joy? If it had not been to fill us with the de-

light of our foreknown blessedness, he might have kept his purpose to himself, and never have let us known it till we came to enjoy it. Yea, when we had got possession of our rest, he might still have concealed its eternity from us, and then the fear of losing it would have much diminished the sweetness of our joys. But it hath pleased our Father to open his counsel, and let us know the very intent of his heart, that our joy might be full, and that we might live as the heirs of such a kingdom. And shall we now overlook all? Shall we live in earthly cares and sorrows, and rejoice no more in these discoveries, than if the Lord had never wrote them? If thy prince had but sealed thee a patent of some lordship, how oft wouldst thou cast thine eye upon it, and make it thy delightful study, till thou shouldst come to possess the dignity itself? And hath God sealed thee a patent of heaven, and dost thou let it lie by thee as if thou hadst forgot it? O that our hearts were as high as our hopes, and our hopes as high as those infallible promises!

Once more consider, there is nothing but heaven worth setting our hearts upon. If God have them not, who shall? If thou mind not thy rest, what wilt thou mind? Hast thou found out some other God? Or something else that will serve thee instead of rest? Hast thou found on earth an eternal happiness? Where is it? What is it made of? Who was the man that found it out? Who was he that last enjoyed it? Where dwelt he? What was his name? Or art thou the first that ever discovered heaven on earth? Ah, wretch! trust not to thy discoveries, boast not of thy gain, till experience bid thee boast. Disquiet not thyself in looking for that which is not on earth, lest thou learn thy experience with the loss of thy soul, which thou mightest have learned on easier terms, even by the

warnings of God in his word, and the loss of thousands of souls before thee. If Satan should take thee up to the mountain of temptation, and shew thee all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, he could shew thee nothing that is worthy thy thoughts, much less to be preferred before thy rest. Indeed, so far as duty and necessity require it, we must be content to mind the things below; but who is he that contains himself within the compass of those limits? And yet if we ever so diligently contract our cares and thoughts, we shall find the least to be bitter and burthensome. Christian, see the emptiness of all these things, and the preciousness of the things above. If thy thoughts should, like the laborious bee, go over the world from flower to flower, from creature to creature, they would bring no honey or sweetness home, save what they gathered from their relations to eternity. Though every truth of God is precious, and ought to be defended, yet even all our study of truth should be still in reference to our rest; for the observation is too true, that the lovers of controversies in religion, have never been warmed with one spark of the love of God. And as for minding the affairs of church and state, so far as they illustrate the providence of God, and tend to the settling of the gospel, and the government of Christ, and consequently to the saving our own souls, and those of our posterity, they are well worth our diligent observation; but these are only their relations to eternity. Even all our dealings in the world, our buying and selling, our eating and drinking, our building and marrying, our peace and war, so far as they relate not to the life to come, but tend only to the pleasing of the flesh, are not worthy the frequent thoughts of a christian. And now doth not thy conscience say, that

there is nothing but heaven, and the way to it, that is worth thy minding?—*Saints' Rest*, p. 234, 239.

CHAP. XX.—*The Will.*

THE *Will* is the *Man* in God's account, and what a man truly would be and have, he is, and shall have.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 841.

He that will glorify God, must live in, and to the will of God, and seek to reduce his own will wholly into God's, and to destroy in himself all will that striveth against God's will.

1. The disposing will of God our owner must be absolutely submitted to, and the bounteous will of God our benefactor, thankfully and joyfully acknowledged.

2. The ruling will of God our lawgiver, must be with daily study and care obeyed, and his punishing and rewarding justice glorified.

3. The final felicitating will and love of God our ultimate end and object, that we may please him, and be everlastingly pleased in him, love him, and be loved by him, must be totally desired and sought, as the only and perfect rest of souls.

O! that is the holy, the joyful, the honourable christian, who daily laboureth (and in some measure doth prevail) to have no will but the will of God, and that which wholly is resolved into it; who looketh no further to know what he should do, but to know by his word what is the law or will of God; who believeth that all that God willeth is good, and had rather have his life, and health and wealth, and friends, at God's will and disposal, than his

own; who knoweth that *God's will is love itself*, and that to please him is the end of all the world, and the only felicity of men and angels; and resteth wholly in the *pleasing* of that will. What can be more *wise* and *just* than to have the same will (objectively) with him who is infinitely *wise* and *just*? What can be more *honourable*, than to have the same *will* as *God himself*, and (so far) as his children, to be *like* our father? What can be more *orderly* and *harmonious*, than for the will of the creature to move according to the *Creator's will*, and to be duly *subservient* to it, and accurately compliant with it? What can be more *holy*, nay, what else is *holiness*, but a *will* and *life* devoted and conformed to the *will* of God? What can be more safe, or what else can be safe at all, but to will the same things which the most *perfect wisdom* doth direct to, and *infinite love itself* doth chuse? And what can be more *easy* and *quieting* to the soul, than to *rest* in that *will* which is *always good*, which never was misguided, and never chose amiss, and never was frustrated, or miss'd of it's decreed ends? If we have no will but what is (objectively) the same with God's, that is, if we wholly comply with, and follow his *will* as our guide; and *rest* in his *will* as our *ultimate end*, our wills will never be disordered, sinful, misled, or frustrate. God hath all that he *willeth* (absolutely), and is never disappointed; and so should we if we could *will* nothing but what he *willeth*. And would you not take him unquestionably for a happy man, who hath whatsoever he *would* have; yea, and would have nothing but what is more *just* and good? There is no way to this happiness but making the *will of God* our *will*. God will not mutably change his will, to bring it to ours: should *holiness itself* be conformed to sinners, and *perfection* to imperfec-

tion? But we must (by grace) bring over *our wills* to God's, and *then* they are in joint, and *then* only will they find content and rest. O what would I beg more earnestly in the world, than a will conformed wholly to God's will, and cast in that mould, and desiring nothing but what God willeth! — *Works*, vol. iv. p. 828.

All the works of a christian are so far truly holy, as they are the effect of *holy love*: for, 1. *holy love* is but a *holy will*, and the *will* is the *man*, in point of morality. 2. And the *love of God* is our *final act upon the final object*; and all other gracious acts are some way *means* subservient to this end: and the end is it that informeth all the *means*, they being such only as they are adapted to the end.

And in this sense it is true, which is said in the schools, (though many *Protestants* misunderstanding it, have contradicted it) that *love* is the *form* of all other graces: that is, it is the heart of the new creature; or it is that by which the *man* is *morally* to be reputed and denominated; and it is the *final* grace which animateth the rest as means.

And thus it is true, that when you will prove any grace to be sincere and saving, or any evidence certain, you must prove it to participate of the *love of God and goodness*, or you have failed and said nothing. (Yea, you must prove it to be conjunct with predominant love, which setteth God above all creatures). And if you will prove any good work to be acceptable to God, (prayer, praise, alms, justice, &c.) you must first prove that it cometh from this *predominant love*: For it is so far and no further acceptable to God. — *Works*, vol. iv. p. 544.

What is it that you are *afraid of*, but lest you miss of your own wills? For sure you fear not lest God's

will should be overcome and frustrate: What are your *cares* about his? What are your *sighs*, and *groans*, and *tears* for? And what is it else that you complain of, but that your *own wills* are not fulfilled? It is not that God hath not his will.

What is it that you are so *impatient* of, but the crossing of your *own wills*? This person crosseth them, and that *accident* crosseth them, and God crosseth them, and you cross them yourselves; and *cross'd* they *will be* while they are as a bone out of joint; there is no ease till it be set right. In a word, a will that is contrary to God's will, and striveth and struggleth against it, is the offspring of the devil, the sum of all sin, and a fore-taste of hell, even a restless self-tormentor; and to will nothing but what God *willeth*, and to love his *will*, and study to *please* him, and *rest therein*, is the rectitude and only *rest* of souls; and he that cannot rest contentedly in the *will of God* must be for ever restless; and when such a *holy will* and *contentment* *appeareth* in you, mankind will reverence it, and see that your natures are as divine; and as they dare not reproach the will of God, so they will fear to speak evil of yours; when they see that you chuse but what God *first* chuseth for you, and your wills do but follow the *will of God*, men will be afraid of provoking God against them as blasphemers, if they should scorn, deride, or vilify you. And could we convince all men that our course is but the same which God *commandeth*, it would do much to stop their reproach and persecution; and if they see that we can joyfully suffer reproach, or poverty, or pains, or death, and joyfully pass away to God when he shall call us, and live and die in a *contented complacency* in the *will of God*, they will see that you have a beginning of heaven on earth, which no tyrant, no loss, or cross, or suffering can deprive

you of while you can joyfully say, The will of the Lord be done, (*Acts*, xxi. 14).—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 828.

CHAP. XXI.—*Christian Temper.*

IF you have a froward wife, or husband, or child, that hath a harsh and passionate nature, and hath so much grace only as to lament this when they are calmed, and to strive against it, but not to forbear the often exercise of it; though such a nature may be pardoned to the penitent, yet it may prove such a thorn in your own side, and such a smoke or continual dropping in your house, as will make you weary of it. I have oft known men that have had wives of so much folly, and passion, and unruliness of tongue, that yet they hoped had some saving grace, that have made them even weary of their lives, and wish they had met with a gentle nature. And methinks, that you should know that corruption in yourselves is much more dangerous and hurtful to you than it can be in wife or husband; and should be much more offensive and wearisome, and grievous to you. It's a desperate sign of a bad heart, that can bear with corruption in themselves, and cannot bear with a wife or husband, or those that do them wrong by their corruptions. If weakness of grace do leave your nearest friends thus liable to wrong and abuse you, and thus trouble you; consider that your own weakness leaves you liable to greater and oftener offences against God, and this should trouble you much more.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 942.

CHAP. XXII.—*Resignation.*

The short pain of pulling out a tooth, is ordinarily endured to prevent a longer. A woman doth bear the pains of her travail because it is short, and tends to the bringing of a child into the world. Who would not submit to any labour or toil for a day, that he might win a life of plenty and delight by it? Who would not be spit upon, and made the scorn of the world for a day, if he might have his will for it, as long as he liveth on earth? And should we not then chearfully submit to our momentary afflictions and troubles of a few days, (which are light, and mixt with a world of mercies), when we know that they are working for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory? (2 Cor. iv. 17).—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 759.

If we try the graces, or obedience of professors, alas, how small shall we find them in the most? How little are most acquainted with the life of faith? How little do they admire the Redeemer and his blessed work? How unacquainted are they with the daily use and high improvement of a saviour for access to God, and supportation, and corroboration of the soul, and for conveyances of supplies of daily grace, and help against our spiritual enemies? How few are they that can rejoice in tribulation, persecution, and bodily distresses, because of the hope laid up in heaven? And that can live upon a promise, and comfortably rely upon God for the accomplishment? How few that live as men that are content to live on God alone, and can chearfully leave their flesh, and credit, and worldly estate to his disposal, and be content to

want or suffer when he sees fit, or good for them? What repinings and troubles perplex our minds, if the flesh be not provided for, and if God do but cross us in these worldly things, as if we had made a bargain with him for the flesh, and for this world, and had not taken him alone for our portion?—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 943.

CHAP. XXIII.—*Resolution.*

It is a common and a very dangerous mistake, that many are undone by, to think that every good desire is a certain sign of saving grace: whereas you may have more than bare desires, even purposes and promises, and some performances, and yet perish for want of resolution and regeneration.

Do you think that Judas himself had not some good desires, that followed Christ so long, and preached the gospel? Do you think that Herod had not some good desires, that heard John so gladly, and did many things accordingly? Agrippa had some good desires when he was persuaded to be almost a christian. They that for a time believe, have surely some good desires, and more; (*Matt.* xiii. 20); and so had the young man that went away sorrowful from Christ, when he could not be his disciple, unless he would part with all that he had (*Luke*, xviii. 23; *Matt.* xix. 22). And doubtless those had more than good desire, that had known the way of righteousness, and had escaped the pollution of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ (*2 Pet.* ii. 20, 21). And so had those (*Heb.* x. 26, 29), that had received the knowledge of the

truth, and were sanctified by the blood of the covenant. And those (*Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6*), that were once enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. And sure, Annanias, and Sapphira, had more than some good desires, when they sold all, and brought half the price to the Apostles.

Believe, sirs, there are none of your desires or endeavours that will serve your turn, or prove you in a state of grace, unless they be accompanied with firm resolution. Be it known to you, that you are converted, if you are not habitually resolved. And therefore I must here entreat you all to put the question close to your hearts. Are you resolved, firmly resolved, to give up yourselves and all to Christ, and to be wholly his, and follow his conduct, or are you not? The question is not, what good meanings, or wishes, or purposes, you may have; but whether you are resolved, and firmly resolved?—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 602.

CHAP. XXIV.—*Hope.*

BLESSED be God, who hath made it my *duty* to *hope* for his salvation. HOPE is the *ease*, yea, the *life* of our hearts, that else would *break*, yea, *die* within us. *Despair* is no small part of hell. God cherisheth *hope*, as he is the lover of souls. Satan, our enemy, cherisheth *despair*, when his way of blind *presumption* faileth. As fear is a foretaste of evil, before it is felt, so hope doth anticipate and foretaste salvation, before it is possessed. It is

then the worldly hypocrite's *hope* that perisheth, for all that *hope* for true or durable happiness on earth, in the pleasures of this perishing flesh, must needs be deceived. But happy is he who hath the God of *Jacob* for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth, which keepeth truth for ever (*Psal.* cxlvi. 5, 6). Wo to me, were my hope only in the time and matters of this fleshly life (1 *Cor.* xv. 19). But the righteous hath hope in his death (*Prov.* xiv. 32). And hope maketh not ashamed (*Rom.* v. 5). Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, whose hope the Lord is (*Jer.* xvii. 7). Lay hold then, O my soul, upon the hope which is set before thee (*Heb.* vi. 18). It is thy firm and stedfast anchor, (*ver.* 19); without it thou wilt be as a shipwrecked vessel. Thy foundation is sure; it is God himself: our faith and hope are both in God (1 *Pet.* i. 21). It is Jesus our Lord who is risen from the dead, and reigneth in glory Lord of all (1 *Tim.* i. 1). Yea, it is Christ who by faith doth work within us, who is our hope of glory (*Eph.* iii. 17; *Col.* i. 27). In this hope, which is better than the law that *Moses* gave, it is that we draw nigh to God (*Heb.* vii. 19). It is the Holy Ghost that is both our evidence, and the efficient of our hope (*Gal.* v. 5; *Rom.* viii. 16, 23). By him we hope for that which we see not, and therefore wait in patience for it, (*ver.* 24, 25). By hope we are saved: it is an encouraging grace which will make us stir, whereas despair doth kill endeavours: it cureth sloth, and makes us diligent and constant to the end, and by this doth help us to *full assurance* (*Heb.* vi. 11, 12). It is a *desiring* grace, and would fain obtain the glory hoped for. It is a quieting and comforting grace (*Rom.* xv. 4). The God of hope doth fill us with joy and peace, in believing that we may abound in hope through

the power of the Holy Ghost, (*ver.* 13). Shake off despondency, O my soul, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (*Rom.* v. 2). *Believe in hope*, though dying flesh would tell thee that it is *against hope* (*Rom.* iv. 18). God, that cannot lie, hath confirmed his covenant by his immutable oath, that we might have strong consolation who are fled for refuge to the hope which is set before us (*Heb.* vi. 18). What blessed preparations are made for our hope? The abundant mercy of God the Father hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us (1 *Pet.* i. 3). Grace teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this world, as looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour (*Tit.* ii. 12, 13). We are renewed by the Holy Ghost, and justified by grace, that we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life (*Tit.* iii. 6, 7). We are illuminated, that we may know the hope of Christ's calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints (*Eph.* i. 18, 19). The hope that is laid up for us in heaven, is the chief doctrine of the gospel, which bringeth life and immortality into clearer light (*Col.* i. 5; 2 *Tim.* i. 10). It is for this hope that we keep a conscience void of offence, and that God is served in the world (*Acts*, xxiv. 15, 16, and 26-7); wherefore gird up the loins of thy mind, put on this helmet, the hope of salvation (1 *Thess.* v. 8), and let not death seem to thee as it doth to them that have no hope (1 *Thess.* iv. 13). The love of the Father and our Saviour, have given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace to comfort our hearts, and establish them in every good word and work

(2 *Thess.* ii. 16, 17). Keep therefore the rejoicing of hope firm to the end (*Heb.* iii. 6). Continue grounded and settled in the faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel (*Col.* i. 2, 3; 1 *Pet.* i. 13). And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee (*Psal.* xxxix. 7). Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live, and let me not be ashamed of my hope (*Psal.* cxix. 116). Though mine iniquities testify against me, yet, O thou that art the hope of *Israel*, the saviour thereof in the time of trouble, be not as a stranger to my soul (*Jer.* xiv. 7, 8). Thy name is called upon by me, O forsake me not, (*ver.* 9). Why have our eyes beheld thy wonders, and why have we had thy covenant and thy mercies, but that we might set our hope in God (*Psal.* lxxviii. 5, 7). Remember the word to thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope (*Psal.* cxix. 49.) If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who should stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared (*Psal.* cxxx. 3, 4, 5, 7).—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 913.

No sin lieth heavier on me, than that my hopes of glory raise me to no higher joy, and that the great weakness of my faith appeareth by such dull thoughts of glory, or by withdrawing fears. Sure there is enough in the glory of God, soundly believed and hoped for, to make a man rejoice in pain and weakness, and to make him long to be with Christ. I live not according to the nature of christianity, if I live not as in peace with God, and in the joyful hopes of promised glory.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 942.

A christian in the holy assemblies, and in his reading, learning prayer, conference, is laying up

for everlasting, when the worldling in the market, in the field, or shop, is making provision for a few days or hours: thou gloriest in thy riches and pre-eminence now, but *how long* wilt thou do so? To-day that house, that land, is thine; but canst thou say it shall be thine *to-morrow*? Thou canst not: But the *believer* can truly say, *my God, my Christ* is mine to-day, and will be mine to all *eternity*! O death! thou canst take my friends from me, and my worldly riches from me! but take *my God, my Christ, my heaven, my portion*, from me, if thou canst!—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 675.

CHAP. XXV.—*Charity.*

I CAN never forget what a sinful thought was once in my mind, which I will venture to confess, because it may possibly be of use to others, that so they may beware: hearing of some that used to lay by the tenth part of their yearly income, for charitable uses, I purposed to do so too, and thought it a fair proportion: but since I have perceived what a vile and wicked thought that was, to offer to cut out a scantling for God, or to give him a limited share of his own, or say, so much shall he have, and no more. Though we cannot say that God must have all, in any one kind of service only; either only for the church, or only for the poor, or only for public uses; yet we must resolve that in one way or other he must have all; and the particular portions to the poor, or church, or other uses, must be assigned by truly sanctified prudence, considering which way it may be most serviceable

to God. I must relieve my own family, or kindred if they want, but not because they are my own, but because God hath commanded me, and so hath made it a part of my obedience. But if I see where I may do more service to God by relieving a stranger, and God doth require it, I must yet prefer them before all the kindred I have in the world. When the christian pattern was set up by the primitive church, (*Acts*, ii. and iv.), they sold all, and laid down the whole price at the Apostle's feet, which was not distributed to their natural kindred only, but to all the poor christians that had no other relation to them, even as every one had need. And as it is the loving of our spiritual brethren in Christ, that is made the sign of our translation from death unto life, so is it the relieving of Christ in these his members, that is, the relieving them, because they are his members, that is made the very matter of our cause in the last judgment, and the ground of the sentence of life or death, (*Matt.* xxv). I must provide for my own body, and you must provide for your children; but this is (as I said before) not as I am my own, nor as your children are your own; but as I am a servant of Christ that must be supported in his service, or as yourselves, and yours are put under your care and duty by God. So that I may give it to myself or others, when I can truly say I do but principally use it for God, and think that the principal service I can do him by it; but I may neither take to myself nor give to any that are nearest to me, any more than God commandeth, or his service doth require. When you and yours have your daily bread (which also must be used for him), you must not go to flesh and blood, but to God, to ask which way you shall dispose of the remainder. This is a strange doctrine to the unsanctified world, but this is because they are un-

sanctified. And it is a doctrine that a worldly hypocrite is loth to believe and understand; but that is because of carnality and hypocrisy, that always deals with God, like Annanias and Sapphira, lying to the Holy Ghost, and giving God but half (and few so much as half), when they daily confess that all is from him, and should be his, and pretend to be wholly devoted to him. There are few men so bad, but will spare God something rather than go to hell; but indeed this is not to devote it to God, but to use it for themselves, thinking by their sacrifices to stop the mouth of justice, and to please God by a part, when they have displeased him in the rest. I much fear (and not without much apparent cause), that abundance among us, that think themselves christians, do worship and serve God, but as some Indians are said to offer sacrifice to the devil, not for any love they have to him, or for his service, but for fear he should hurt them. And there are few hypocrites but will pretend it is, but from very love. O sirs, it's a great matter to resign and give up yourselves, and all you have to God, and heartily to quit all claim to yourselves, and all things, than many a thousand self-deluded professors do imagine. Many look at this but as some high extraordinary strain of piety. And the Papists almost appropriate it to a few, that live in monastical orders, when indeed the sincerity of this resignation, and dedication, is the very sincerity of sanctification itself. And let me tell you, that the unfeigned convert that attains to this, hath not only pluck'd up the root of sin, (though all of us hath too many strings of it), not only stopt up the spring of temptation, and got the surest evidence of his uprightness, but also is got himself into the safest, and most comfortable state. For when he hath absolutely resigned himself, and all to God,

how confidently may he expect that God will accept him, and use him as his own? And how comfortably may he commit himself and his cause, and all good affairs to God, as knowing that God cannot be negligent and careless of his own? It's an argument that may make us confident of success, when we can say as David, (*Psal. cxix. 94*). I am thine, save me, (*Isa. lxiii. 19*). Even Christ himself doth ingratiate his elect with the father on this account (*John, xvii. 6, 9, 10*). Thine they were, and thou gavest them me: I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me: for they are thine; and all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them, and in deed by resigning all to God, it is the more our own; that is, we have unspeakably more of the benefit of it, and so there is no way to make it our own, but by quitting it absolutely up to God: this is the mystery that the world will not learn, but God will teach it all that will be saved by his Spirit, and by faith, (*Matt. xvi. 24, 25, 26*).—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 584.

CHAP. XXVI.—*Love of the Brethren.*

AND are they not then notorious hypocrites, to profess to believe in God, and yet scorn at those that diligently seek him (*Heb. xi. 6*); to profess faith in Christ, and hate those that obey him; to profess to believe in the Holy Ghost as the Sanctifier, and yet hate and scorn his sanctifying work; to profess to believe the day of judgment, and everlasting torment of the ungodly, and yet to deride

those that endeavour to escape it; to profess to believe that Heaven is prepared for the godly, and yet to scorn at those that make it the chief business of their lives to attain it; to profess to take the Holy Scriptures for God's word and law, and yet to scorn those that obey it; to pray after each of the ten commandments, Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law, and yet to hate all those that desire and endeavour to keep them? What impudent hypocrisy is joined with this malignity? Mark whether the greatest diligence of the most godly be not justified with the formal profession of those very men that hate and scorn them?—*Works*, vol. i. p. 20.

Two sorts of men do most dangerously sin against or abuse the Holy Ghost: the first is the profane, who through custom and education can say, "I believe in the Holy Ghost; and say, that "He sanctifieth them, and all the elect people of God;" but hate or resist all sanctifying words and motions of the Holy Ghost, and hate all those that are sanctified by him, and make them the objects of their scorn, and deride the very name of sanctification, or at least the thing.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 61.

CHAP. XXVII.—*Regulation of the Thoughts.*

OVERMUCH sorrow disableth a man to govern his thoughts; and ungoverned thoughts must needs be both sinful and very troublesome: grief carrieth them away as in a torrent; you may almost as easily keep the leaves or trees in quietness and order in a blustering wind, as the thoughts of one

in troubling passions. If reason would stop them from perplexing subjects, or turn them to better and sweeter things, it cannot do it; it hath no power against the stream of troubling passions.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 833.

Keep up a constant government over your thoughts and tongues, especially against those particular sins which you are strongest tempted to, and which you see other christians most overtaken with.

Keep your thoughts employed upon something that is good and profitable; either about some useful truths, or about some duty to God and man, of your general or particular calling; yea, about all these in their several seasons: learn how to watch your thoughts, and stop them at their first excursions, and how to quicken them, and make them serviceable to every grace and every duty. You can never improve your solitary hours if you have not the government of your thoughts.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 959.

Methinks you should consider how disproportionably and unequally you lay out your thoughts. Cannot you spare God the tenth, no, nor the hundredth part of them? Look back upon your lives, and trace your thoughts from day to day, and tell me how many hours in a week, in a month, in a year, you have spent in serious thoughts of the state of your souls and of the life to come. Is it one hour of a hundred, of a thousand, of ten thousand, with some of you, that is thus spent? Nay, I have very great cause to fear that there are some, yea, that there are many, yea, that there is far the greatest number, that never spent one hour since they were born, in withdrawing themselves pur-

posely from all business, and soberly and in good sadness, bethinking themselves what case they are in, what evidence they have of their salvation, or how they must be justified at the bar of God; no, nor what business they have in the world, and to what end they were made, and how they have done the work they were made for. Ah, sirs! doth conscience justify you in this? Or rather, will it not torment you one day to remember it? What! did thy land, and livings, worldly matters, deserve all thy thoughts; and did not the saving of thy soul deserve some of them? Did thy lusts, and sports, and wantonness deserve all; and did not God deserve some of them? Was it not worth now and then an hour's time, no, nor one hour's study in all thy life, to bethink thee in good sadness how to make sure of a life of endless joy and glory, and how to escape the flames of hell? This is not an equal distribution of thought, as thou wilt confess at last in the horror of thy soul.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 564.

CHAP. XXVIII.—*Instructing Others.*

ALL you whom God hath intrusted with the care of children or servants, I would persuade to the great work of helping them to the heavenly rest. Consider, what plain and pressing commands of God, require this at your hands. "These words thou shalt teach diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up," (*Deut.* vi. 6, 7). "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it,"

(*Prov.* xxii. 6). “Bring up **your** children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,” (*Eph.* vi. 4). “Joshua resolved that he and his house would serve the Lord,” (*Josh.* xxiv. 15). And God himself said of Abraham, “I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord,” (*Gen.* xviii. 19). Consider it is a duty you owe, in point of justice, to your children. From you they received the defilement and misery of their natures, and therefore you owe them all possible help for their recovery. Consider how near your children are to you. They are parts of yourselves. If they prosper when you are dead, you take it as if you lived and prospered in them; and should you not be of the same mind for their everlasting rest? Otherwise you will be witnesses against your own souls; yea, all the brute creatures may condemn you. Which of them is not tender of their young? Consider, God hath made your children your charge, and your servants too. Every one will confess they are the minister’s charge. And have not you a greater charge of your own families, than any minister can have of them? Doubtless, at your hands God will require the blood of their souls. It is the greatest charge you were ever entrusted with; and woe to you, if you suffer them to be ignorant or wicked for want of your instruction or correction.

On the other side, think what a comfort you may have, if you be faithful in this duty. If you should not succeed, you have freed your own souls, and have peace in your own consciences. If you do, the comfort is inexpressible, in their love and obedience, their supplying your wants, and delighting you in all your remaining path to glory. Yea, all your family may fare the better for one pious child or servant. But the greatest joy will be,

when you shall say, Lord, here I am, and the children thou hast given me; and shall joyfully live with them for ever. Consider, how much the welfare of church and state depends on this duty. Good laws will not reform us, if reformation begins not at home. This is the cause of all our miseries in church and state, even the want of a holy education of children. I also intreat parents to consider, what excellent advantages they have for saving their children. They are with you while they are tender and flexible. You have a twig to bend, not an oak. None in the world have such interest in their affections as you have. You have also the greatest authority over them. Their whole dependence is upon you for a maintenance. You best know their temper and inclinations. And you are ever with them, and can never want opportunities: especially you mothers, remember this, who are more with your children while young, than their fathers. What pains are you at for their bodies? What do you suffer to bring them into the world? And will you not be at as much pains for the saving of their souls? Your affections are tender; and will it not move you to think of their perishing for ever? I beseech you, for the sake of the children of your bowels, teach them, admonish them, watch over them, and give them no rest till you have brought them to Christ.—*Saints' Rest*, p. 186-188.

CHAP. XXIX.—*Duties in which Believers are backward.*

AMONG all duties, I think the soul is most backward to these following. 1. To secret prayer, be-

cause it is spiritual, and requires great reverence, and hath nothing of external pomp or form to take us up with, and consisteth not much in the exercise of common gifts, but in the exercise of special grace, and the breathings of the spirit, and searchings, pantings, strivings, &c. of a gracious soul towards God. I do not speak of the heartless repeating of bare words, learned by rote, and either not understood, or not uttered from the feeling of the soul. 2. To serious meditation also, is the soul very backward; that is, either to meditate on God, and the promised glory, or any spiritual subject, to this end, that the heart may be thereby quickened and raised, and graces exercised (though to meditate on the same subject, only to know or dispute on it, the heart is nothing near so backward). Or else to meditate on the state of our own hearts, by way of self-examination, or self-judging, or self-reprehension, or self-exciting. 3. Also to the duty of faithful dealing with each other's souls, in secret reproof and exhortation, plainly, (though lovingly) to tell each other of our sins and danger; to this the heart is usually very backward; partly through a sinful bashfulness, partly for want of more believing, lively apprehensions of our duty, and our brothers' danger, and partly because we are loth to displease men and lose their favour, it being so common for men to fall out with those (if not hate them) that deal plainly and faithfully with them. 4. Also to take a reproof, as well as to give it, the heart is very backward; even godly men (through the sad remainders of their sinfulness) do too commonly frown, and snarl, and retort out reproofs, and study presently how to excuse themselves, and put it by, or how to charge us with something that may stop our mouths, and make the reprover seem as bad as themselves: though

they dare not tread our reproofs under feet, and turn again, and all to rent us, yet they oft shew the remains of an evil nature, though when they review their ways it cost them sorrow; liker an approving than a reproving them, liker a flattery than a faithful dealing with them; and yet when we have done all, they go down very hardly, and that but half-way, even with many godly people, where they are under a temptation. 5. The like may be said of all those duties which do pinch upon our credit, or profit, or tend to disgrace us, or impoverish us in the world; as the confessing of a disgraceful fault; the free giving to the poor or sacred uses, according to our estates; the parting with our right or gain for peace; the patient sufferings of wrong, and forgiving it heartily, and loving bitter abusive enemies, especially the running upon the stream of men's displeasure, and incurring the danger of being utterly undone in our worldly state (especially if men be rich, who do themselves hardly get to heaven as a camel through a needle's eye); and above all, the laying down our lives for Christ. It cannot be expected that godly men should perform all these with perfect willingness; the flesh will play its part, in pleading its own cause, and will strive hard to maintain its own interest. O the shifts, the subtle arguments, or at least the clamorous and importunate contradictions that all these duties will meet with in the best, so far as they are renewed, and their graces weak! so that you may well hence conclude that you are sinners, but you may not conclude that you are graceless, because of a backwardness, and some unwillingness to duty.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 860.

CHAP. XXX.—*Christian Conduct.*SECT. 1.—*Knowledge.*

LABOUR after a right understanding of the true nature of christianity, and the meaning of the gospel which is sent to convert you. You are naturally slaves to the prince of darkness, and live in a state of darkness, and do the works of darkness, and are hastening apace to utter darkness; and it is the light of saving knowledge that must recover you, or there is no recovery. God is the father of light, and dwelleth in light; Christ is the light of the world, his ministers are also the light of the world, as under him, and sent to turn men from darkness to light, by the gospel, which is a light unto our feet; and this is to make us children of the light, that we may no more do the works of darkness; but may be made partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4; 1 John, xv. 9; Jam. i. 17; Matt. i. 5, 14; Acts, xxvi. 18; John, viii. 12; 2 Pet. xix.; Eph. v. 8, 13; Col. i. 12). Believe it, darkness is not the way to the celestial glory; ignorance is your disease, and knowledge must be your cure. I know the ignorant have many excuses, and are apt to think that the case is not so bad with them as we make it to be; and that there is no such need of knowledge but a man may be saved without it: but this is because they want that knowledge that should shew them the misery of their ignorance, and the worth of knowledge. Hath not the scripture plainly told you, that if the gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, whose minds the god of this world hath blinded, lest the light of the

glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them? I do not say that you must all be men of learning, and skilled in the arts and sciences, and languages; but you must have the knowledge of a christian, though not of a scholar. Can you love or serve a God that you know not? Can you let go friends and goods, and life, for a glory that you have no knowledge of? Can you make it the principal business of your life, to seek for a heaven whose excellency you know nothing of? Can you lament your sin and misery when you are unacquainted with it? Or will you strive against sin as the greatest evil, when you know not the evil of it? Will you believe in a Christ whom you do not know, and trust your soul and all upon him? Will you rest upon a promise, or fear a threatening, or be ruled by a law which you do not understand? It is not possible to be christians without knowing the substance of christianity; nor is it possible for you to be saved without knowing the way of salvation.

Labour therefore to be well acquainted with the grounds and reasons, and nature of your religion. The clearer your light is, the warmer and livelier your hearts will be: illumination is the first part of sanctification. The head is the passage to the heart. Study therefore what God is, and what he is to you, and what he would be to you. Study what sin is, and what the damnation is which it deserveth. Study what Christ is, and hath done and suffered for you, and what he is willing to do, if you neglect him not. Study what the world is, and what is the utmost sin will do for you. Study what the everlasting glory is which you may have with God, if you lose it not by your folly. And study what faith is, and what repentance is, and what love and joy, and a holy and heavenly life,

and how little reason you have to be afraid of them. If this understanding have but deeply possessed you, it will biass your hearts, and make you resolved, settled converts. Whereas if you seem to turn, and scarce know why, and seem to take up a christian life before you are possessed with the nature, grounds, and reasons of it, no marvel if you are quickly lost again in the dark, and if every caviller you meet with can nonplus you, and make you stagger, and call in question all you have done, and ravel all you work; or if you do but run from one party to another, and follow every one that tells you a fair tale, and never know what to fix upon, nor when you are in the way, nor when you are out.

The apprehensions of the mind do move the whole man; wisdom is the guide and stay of the soul. Sinning is doing foolishly (2 *Sam.* xxiv. 10). And sinners are fools (*Prov.* i. 22; *Psal.* lxxv. 4). Their mirth is but the mirth of fools, and their song the songs of fools (*Eccl.* v. 1). And such are not fit for the house of God; for God hath not pleasure in fools (*Eccl.* v. 4). He hath need to have his wits about him, and know what he doth that will be the servant of the God of heaven, and escape the deceits of a subtle devil, and get to heaven through so many difficulties as are before him. Above all getting, therefore get wisdom.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 556.

SECT. 2.—*Reading.*

O for a man or woman, that is under a load of sin, unassured of pardon and salvation, that is near to death, and unready to die, to be seen with a story or romance in their hand! what a gross incongruity is this? It's fitter the book of God should be

in your hand; it's that which you must live by and be judged by.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 378.

SECT. 3.—*Conversation.*

Provide matter of holy discourse of purpose beforehand. As you will not travel without money in your purses to defray your charges, so you should not go into company without a provision of such matter as may be profitable for the company that you may be cast upon.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 377.

Whenever God's holy name or word are blasphemed, or used in levity, or jest, or a holy life is made a scorn, or God is notoriously abused or dishonoured, be ready to reprove it with gravity when you can, and when you cannot, at least let your detestation of it be conveniently manifested.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 142.

Beware of the company of the ungodly; not that I would dissuade thee from necessary converse, or from doing them any office of love; especially, not from endeavouring the good of their souls, as long as thou hast any opportunity or hope; nor would have thee conclude them to be dogs and swine, in order to evade the duty of reproof; nor ever to judge them such at all, as long as there is any hope for the better; much less can I approve of their practice, who conclude men dogs and swine, before ever they faithfully and lovingly admonish them, or perhaps before they have known them, or spoke with them. But it is the unnecessary society of ungodly men, and too much familiarity with unprofitable companions, that I dissuade you from. Not only the open profane, the swearer, the drunkard, and the enemies of

godliness, will prove hurtful companions to us, though these indeed are carefully to be avoided, but too frequent society with persons merely civil and moral, whose conversation is empty and unedifying, may much divert our thoughts from heaven. Our backwardness is such, that we need the most constant and powerful helps. A stone, or a clod, is as fit to arise and fly in the air, as our hearts are naturally to move towards heaven. You need not hinder the rocks from flying up to the sky; it is sufficient that you do not help them. And surely if our spirits have not great assistance, they may easily be kept from soaring upward, though they never should meet with the least impediment. O think of this in the choice of your company! When your spirits are so disposed for heaven, that you need no help to lift them up, but as flames you are always mounting, and carrying with you all that is in your way, then you may indeed be less careful of your company; but till then, as you love the delights of a heavenly life, be careful herein. What will it advantage thee in a divine life, to hear how the market goes, or what the weather is, or is like to be, or what news is stirring? This is the discourse of earthly men. What will it conduce to the raising of thy heart Godward, to hear that this is an able minister, or that an eminent christian, or this an excellent sermon, or that an excellent book, or to hear some difficult but unimportant controversy? Yet this, for the most part, is the sweetest discourse thou art like to have from a formal, speculative, dead-hearted professor. Nay, if thou hadst newly been warming thy heart in the contemplation of the blessed joys above, would not this discourse benumb thy affections, and quickly freeze thy heart again? I appeal to the judgment of any man who hath tried it, and maketh obser-

ventions on the frame of his spirit. Men cannot well talk of one thing and mind another, especially things of such different natures. You, young men, who are most liable to this temptation, think seriously of what I say; can you have your hearts in heaven among your roaring companions in an ale-house or tavern? Or when you work in your shops, with those whose common language is either filthiness, or foolish talking, or jesting? Nay, let me tell you, if you chuse such company when you might have better, and find most delight in such, you are so far from a heavenly conversation, that as yet you have no title to heaven at all, and in that state, shall never come there. If your treasure was there, your heart could not be on things so distant. In a word, our company will be part of our happiness in heaven, and it is a singular part of our furtherance to it, or hindrance from it.—*Saints' Rest*, p. 246.

Let thy eternal rest be the subject of thy frequent serious discourse; especially with those that can speak from their hearts, and are seasoned themselves with a heavenly nature. It is pity christians should ever meet together, without some talk of their meeting in heaven, or of the way to it, before they part. It is pity so much time is spent in vain conversation and useless disputes, and not a serious word of heaven among them. Methinks we should meet together on purpose to warm our spirits with discoursing of our rest. To hear a christian set forth that blessed glorious state, with life and power, from the promises of the gospel; methinks should make us say, "did not our hearts burn within us, while he opened unto us the scriptures?" (*Luke*, xxiv. 32). If a Felix will tremble when he hears his judgment powerfully

represented, why should not the believer be revived when he hears his eternal rest described? Wicked men can be delighted in talking together of their wickedness; and should not christians then be delighted in talking of Christ? and the heirs of heaven in talking of their inheritance? This may make our hearts revive, as it did Jacob's to hear the message that called him to Goshen, and to see the chariots that should bring him to Joseph. O that we were furnished with skill and resolution, to turn the stream of men's common discourse to these more sublime and precious things! And when men begin to talk of things unprofitable, that should tell how to put in a word for heaven, and say, as Peter of his bodily food, "Not so, for I have never eaten of any thing that is common or unclean!" O the good that we might both do and receive by this course? Had it not been to deter us from unprofitable conversation, Christ would not have talked of our giving an account of every idle word in the day of judgment, (*Matt. xii. 36*). Say then, as the Psalmist, when you are in company, "let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." (*Psal. cxxxvii. 6*).—*Saints' Rest*, p. 259.

Make choice of such christians for your familiar friends, and the companions of your lives, as are holy, humble, heavenly, serious, mortified, charitable, peaceable, judicious, experienced in the ways of God; and not of ungodly persons, or proud, self-conceited, sensual, worldly, opinionative, censorious, dividing, injudicious, unexperienced, superficial, lukewarm, or unsettled professors.

Your company is a matter of exceeding great

concernment to you, as one of the greatest helps or hindrances, comforts or discomforts, of all your lives, especially those that you dwell with, and those that you choose for your familiars and bosom friends. And therefore (so far as God's providence doth not forbid you, and make it impossible) choose such as are here described, or at least one such for your bosom friend, if you can have acquaintance with no more. It is of unspeakable importance to your salvation, with whom you are associated for most familiar converses. A good companion will teach you what you know not, or remind you of what you forget, or stir you up when you are dull, or warm you when you are cold, and watch over you and warn you of your danger, and save you from the poison of ill companions. O what a help and delight is it to have a holy, judicious, faithful friend to open your hearts to, and watch within the ways of life. And how exceeding hard it is to escape sin and hell, and get well to heaven, in company and familiarity with the servants of the devil, who are posting unto hell? Let not your companions be worse than yourselves, lest they make you worse; but as much wiser and better as you can procure. See *Eccles.* iv. 9, 12; *Psalm*, xvi. 22, and cxix. 63; *Prov.* xiii. 20.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 959.

SECT. 4.—*Disputation.*

Avoid frequent disputes about lesser truths, and a religion that lies only in opinions. They are usually least acquainted with a heavenly life, who are violent disputers about the circumstantialia of religion. He, whose religion is all in his opinions, will be most frequently and zealously speaking his opinions; and he, whose religion lies in the know-

ledge and love of God and Christ, will be more delightfully speaking of that happy time when he shall enjoy them. He is a rare and precious christian, who is skilful to improve well known truths. Therefore let me advise you who aspire after a heavenly life, not to spend too much of your thoughts, your time, your zeal, or your speech, upon disputes that less concern your souls; but when hypocrites are feeding on husks and shells, do you feed on the joys above. I wish you were able to defend every truth of God, and to this end would read and study; but still I would have the chief truths to be chiefly studied, and none to cast out your thoughts of Eternity. The least controverted points are usually most weighty, and of most necessary frequent use to our souls. Therefore study well such scripture precepts as these; "him that is weak in the faith, receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations," (*Rom. xiv. 1*). "Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes, and the servants of the Lord must not strive," (*2 Tim. xi. 23, 24*). "Avoid foolish questions and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain," (*Tit. iii. 9*). "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strifes, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupted minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness; from such withdraw thyself," (*1 Tim. vi. 3, 5*).—*Saints' Rest*, p. 248.

Baxter gives excellent advice to believers, (*Life*

of Faith) against entering into debates in defence of christianity at improper times and seasons, and by persons unequal to cope with the devil.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 551.

SECT. 5.—*Wealth and Poverty.*

He is not the poor man that hath but little, but he that would have more; nor is he the rich man that hath much, but he that is content with what he hath. If you pray for your daily bread, be not such hypocrites as by the bent of your desires to cross your prayers.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 440.

Look to your end, and secure the main: dream not that you have any full propriety; remember that you are God's stewards; set therefore your master's name, and not your own, upon every pennyworth you possess; let holiness to the Lord be written upon all. Possess nothing but what is de-voted to him, to be used as he would have you. Put him not off with scraps and leavings, that gave you all. So much as you save from him, you lose; and so much as you lose for him, and surrender to him, and improve for him, you save, and more than save. For godliness with content is great gain, *and he that is faithful in a little, shall be made ruler over much.*—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 440.

Though the prosperity of fools destroy them, do not hence accuse God that giveth them prosperity; nor do not think to excuse yourselves; nor do not think that riches are evil; for the things are good, and mercies in themselves, and being rightly used, may further their felicity. But it is the folly and corruption of their hearts, that thus abuseth them, and maketh good an occasion of evil. I may allude

to Paul's words concerning the law, (*Rom. vii. 7, 13*). Are they sin? Or is that which is good made death to them? God forbid, but sin, that it may appear sin, worketh death by that which is good: because they are carnally sold under sin. Nor must you cast away your riches, or refuse them when offered by God. But take them as a faithful steward doth his master's stock, not desiring to be overburdened or endangered with the charge, but bearing what is imposed on you, resolving to improve it all for God. Not loving or desiring wealth, authority, or honour, nor yet so lazy, timorous, or distrustful as not to accept the burden and charge, when God may be served by it. To cast away or hide your talents, is the part of an unprofitable servant.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 478.

Whenever you have several ways before you for the laying out of your money or your time, let the question be seriously put to your heart, which of these ways shall I wish at death and judgment that I had expended it? And let that be chosen as the way.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 441.

When you begin to taste more sweetness in the creature, and be more tickled with applause and honour, and pleased more with a full estate, and more impatient with poverty, or wants, or wrongs from men, and crosses in the world; and when you are set upon a thriving course, and are eager to grow rich, and in love with money; when you drown yourselves in worldly cares and businesses, and are cumbered about many things by your own choice, this shews indeed that you are dangerously unhumbled, and if God have mercy for you, he will bring you low, and make your riches gall and wormwood to you, and abate your appetite, and

teach you to know that one thing is needful; and to be more eager after the food that perisheth not, and hereafter to choose the better part, (*Luke*, x. 41, 42; *Joh.* vi. 27).

When you can return to play with the occasions of sin, or look upon it with a reconcileable mind, as if you had yet some mind on it, and could almost find in your heart to be doing it again; when you begin to have a mind of your old company and courses, or begin to draw as near it as you dare, and are gazing upon the bait, and tasting of the forbidden thing, and can scarce tell how to deny your fancies, your appetites, your senses and desires; this shews that you want some awakening work. God must yet read you another lecture in the black book, and set you to spell those lines of blood which it seems you have forgotten; and kindle a little of that fire in your conscience, which else you would run into, till you feel and understand, whether it be good playing with sin, and the wrath of God, and the everlasting fire.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 575.

Adam says, I see the devil's hook, and yet will be nibbling at the bait.

SECT. 6.—*Industry.*

No man can be excused from doing all the good he can to others, by any pretence of looking to his soul; for he can no way more surely further his salvation; nor can he hinder it more, than by sinful negligence or sloth.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 639.

A christian indeed is faithful and laborious in his calling, and that not out of a covetous mind; but obedience to God, and that he may maintain his family, and be able to do good to others. For

God has said, In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread (*Gen. iii. 19*). And six days shalt thou labour (*Exod. xx. 10*). And with quietness men must work, and eat their own bread, and if any will not work, neither should he eat (*2 Thess. iii. 10, 11, 12*). Abraham and Noah, and Adam, laboured in a constant course of employment. He knoweth that a sanctified calling and labour is a help, and not a hindrance to devotion; and that the body must have work as well as the soul, and that religion must not be pretended for slothful idleness, nor against obedience to our master's will (*Prov. xxxi.*)—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 986.

SECT. 7.—*Residence.*

Do your best to settle yourselves where there are the greatest helps and smallest hindrances to the redeeming of your time; and labour to accommodate your habitation, condition, and employments more to the great ends of your life and time, than to your worldly honour, ease, or wealth.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 227.

Do you not know that you are more like to over-love pleasing accommodations, sumptuous houses, fine furniture, with gardens, walks, and decorated grounds, than a mean habitation? Why should you be such enemies to your own salvation, as to make temptations for yourselves? Have you not temptations enough already? Do you deal with those you have so well, and overcome them so easily and so constantly, as that you have reason to desire more? —*Works*, vol. iii. p. 380.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, do shut up your liturgy by way of

benediction; but it is almost all shut out of your sermons, unless a few heartless customary passages; and when there is nothing less in your preaching, than that which is the *substance* of your baptismal covenant and christianity, and your *customary benediction*; you do but tell the people what kind of *christianity* you have, and what *benediction*: that is, that you are neither truly *christians*, nor *blessed*.

True morality, or the christian ethicks, is the *love of God and man, stirred up by the spirit of Christ through faith; and exercised in works of piety, justice, charity, and temperance, in order to the attainment of everlasting happiness, in the perfect unison and fruition of God.* And none but ignorant or brain-sick sectaries, will be offended for the preaching of any of this *morality* (*Luke, xi. 42*).—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 610.

SECT. 8.—*Retirement and Solitude.*

They that do but little good (according to their ability) must expect but little comfort. They have usually most peace and comfort to themselves that are the most profitable to others.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 755.

Baxter has a passage upon the business of a christian with God, in solitude, that well deserves reading.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 758.

SECT. 9.—*Affliction.*

Mark well, *whether you find not that yourselves and others are usually much better in affliction than in prosperity; and whether there be not something in the one to make you better, and in the other to*

delude men, and make them worse. O look and tremble, at the dangers and doleful miseries of most that are lifted high! how they are blinded, flattered, and captivated in sin, and are the shame of nature, and the calamity of the world! and mark when they come to die, or lie in sickness, how enlightened, how penitent, how humble, how mortified, and reformed they then seem to be, and how much they condemn all sin, and justify a holy life; and observe *yourselves*, whether you be not *wiser* and *better*, more *penitent*, and less *worldly* in an afflicted state: and will you think that intolerable, which so much bettereth almost all the world? Alas, were it not for affliction, there are some *Nebuchadnezzars* that would never be humbled, and some *Pharaohs* that would never confess their sins, and some *Manassehs* that would never be converted. Many in heaven are thankful for affliction, and so should we (*Eccles. vii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*).—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 645.

We are not yet come to our resting place. Doth it remain? How great then is our sin and folly, to expect it here? Where shall we find the christian that deserves not this reproof? We would all have continual prosperity, because it is easy and pleasing to the flesh; but we consider not the unreasonableness of such desires. And when we enjoy convenient houses, goods, lands, and revenues; or the necessary means God hath appointed for our spiritual good; we seek rest in these enjoyments. Whether we are in an afflicted or prosperous state, it is apparent, we exceedingly make the creature our rest. Do we not desire creature enjoyments more violently, when we want them, than we desire God himself? Do we not delight more in the possession of them, than in the enjoyment of God?

And if we lose them, doth it not trouble us more than the loss of God? Is it not enough, that they are refreshing helps in our way to heaven; but they must also be made our heaven itself? Christian reader, I would as willingly make thee sensible of this sin, as of any sin in the world, if I could tell how to do it; for the Lord's greatest quarrel with us is in this point. In order to this, I most earnestly beseech thee to consider the reasonableness of present affliction, and the unreasonableness of resting in present enjoyments; as also of our unwillingness to die, that we may possess eternal rest.

To shew the reasonableness of present afflictions, consider, they are the way to rest, and they keep us from mistaking our rest, and from losing our way to it; they quicken our pace towards it; they chiefly incommode our flesh; and under them God's people have often the sweetest foretastes of rest.

Consider, that labour and trouble are the common way to rest, both in the course of nature and grace. Can there possibly be rest without weariness? Do you not travel and toil first, and rest after? The day for labour is first, and then follow the night for rest. Why should we desire the course of grace to be perverted, any more than the course of nature? It is an established decree, "that we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of heaven" (*Acts*, xiv. 22). And that "if we suffer, we shall also reign with Christ" (*2 Tim.* ii. 12). And what are we, that God's statutes should be reversed for our pleasure?

Afflictions are exceeding useful to us to keep us from mistaking our rest. A christian's motion toward heaven is voluntary, and not constrained.

Those means, therefore, are most profitable, which help his understanding and will. The most dangerous mistake of our souls is, to take the creature for God, and earth for heaven. What warm, affectionate, eager thoughts have we of the world, till afflictions cool and moderate them? Afflictions speak convincingly, and will be heard when preachers cannot. Many a poor christian is sometimes bending his thoughts to wealth or flesh-pleasing, or applause, and so loses his relish of Christ and the joy above; till God break in upon his riches, or children, or conscience, or health, and break down his mountain, which he thought so strong; and then, when he lieth in Manasseh's fetters, or is fastened to the bed with pining sickness, the world is nothing, and heaven is something. If our dear Lord did not put these thorns under our head, we should sleep out our lives, and lose our glory.

Afflictions are also God's most effectual means to keep us from losing our way to our rest. Without this hedge of thorns on the right hand and left, we should hardly keep the way to heaven. If there be but one gap open, how ready are we to find it, and turn out at it? When we grow wanton, or worldly, or proud, how doth sickness, or other afflictions reduce us? Every christian, as well as Luther, may call afflictions one of his best school-masters; and with David may say, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I learnt to keep thy word." Many thousand recovered sinners may cry, "O healthful sickness! O comfortable sorrows! O gainful losses! O enriching poverty! O blessed day that ever I was afflicted!" Not only the green pastures, and still waters, but the rod and staff, they comfort us. Though the

word and spirit do the main work, yet suffering so unbolts the door of the heart, that the word hath easier entrance.

Afflictions likewise serve to quicken our pace in the way to our rest. It were well if mere love would prevail with us, and that we were rather drawn to heaven, than driven. But seeing our hearts are so bad, that mercy will not do it; it is better to be put on with the sharpest scourge, than loiter, like the foolish virgins, till the door is shut. O what difference is there betwixt our prayers in health and in sickness; betwixt our repentance in prosperity and adversity! Alas! if we did not sometimes feel the spur, what a slow pace would most of us hold towards heaven? Since our vile natures require it, why should we be unwilling that God should do us good by sharp means? Judge, christian, whether thou dost not go more watchfully and speedily in the way to heaven, in thy sufferings, than in thy more pleasing and prosperous state?—*Saint's Rest*, p. 191.

I am persuaded, our discontents and murmurings are not so provoking to God, nor so destructive to the sinner, as our too sweet enjoying, and resting in, a pleasing state. If God should cross you in wife, children, goods, friends, either by taking them away, or the comfort of them, try whether this be not the cause.—*Saint's Rest*, p. 199.

Take it not for a calamity, but for a precious advantage, when God calls thee to a hazardous costly service, which is like to cost thee much of thy estate, to cast thee to the loss of thy chiefest friends, the loss of thy credit, the indignation of great ones, or the painfullest diligence and trouble of body: shift it not off, but take this opportunity

thankfully, lest thou never have such another for the clearing of thy sincerity, and the obtaining more than ordinary consolations from God. Thou hast now a prize in thy hands for spiritual riches, if thou hast but a heart to improve it. I know all this is a paradox to the unbelieving world. But here is the very excellency of the christian religion, and the glory of faith. It looks for its greatest spoils, and richest prizes, from its conquests of fleshly interests. It is not only able to do it, but it expecteth its advancements and consolations by this way. It is engaged in a war with the world and flesh; and in this war, it plays not the vapouring fencer, that seems to do much, but never strikes at home, as hypocrites and carnally worldly professors do: but he lays it home and spares not, as one that knows, that the flesh's ruin must be his rising, and the flesh's thriving would be his ruin. In these things the true christian alone is in good sadness, and all the rest of the world but in jest. The Lord pity poor deluded souls! You may see by this one thing, how rare a thing true christianity is among the multitudes, that take themselves for christians! And how certain therefore it is, that few shall be saved! Even this one point of true mortification and self-denial, is a stranger among the most of professors.

In your preventing sin, and maintaining your innocency, if you cannot do it without denying your credit, and exposing yourself to disgrace, or without the loss of friends, or a breach in your estate, do it nevertheless; yea, if it would cost you your utter ruin in the world, thank God that put such an opportunity into your hands for extraordinary consolations. For ordinarily the martyr's comforts exceeded other men's, as much as their burthen of duty and sufferings doth. Cyprian

is fain to write for the comfort of some christians in his time, that at death were troubled that they missed of their hopes of martyrdom. So also, if you cannot mortify any lust without much pinching the flesh, do it cheerfully; for the dearer the victory costeth you, the sweeter will be the issue and review.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 891, 892.

SECT. 10.—*Temptation.*

Cast not yourselves wilfully upon temptations, but avoid them as far as lawfully you can; and if you are cast upon them unwillingly, resist them resolutely, as knowing that they come to entice you into sin and hell, from God and your everlasting happiness; and therefore be well acquainted with the particular temptations of every company, calling, relation, business, time, place, and condition of life, and go always furnished with particular antidotes against them all.

Strong graces will do more against strong temptations, than weak graces against weak ones. Temptation is the way to sin, and sin is the way to hell. If you saw the dangerousness of your station, when you cast yourselves upon temptations, you would tremble and fly, as for your lives. I take that man as almost gone already, who chooseth temptation, or avoids them not when he may. Especially be acquainted with the diseases and greatest dangers of your soul, and there keep up a constant watch. Are you liable to a gluttonness, pleasing appetite? Avoid the temptation; set not that before you which may be your snare: let a little, and that of the least tempting kind of food, be your ordinary provision. Sit not at the glutton's table (who fareth deliciously every day), if you would escape the glutton's sin and misery. Or if the pro-

vision be of other men's disposal, at least rise quickly and be gone. Are you inclined to please your appetites in drinking? Avoid such strong drink as may please your appetites, and tempt you to intoxication; and avoid the place and company that draw you to it. Are you inclined to fleshly lusts? Avoid the presence of such of the other sex as are temptations to you: look not on them, nor talk not of them; but above all, take heed of familiarity and privacy with them; and of all opportunity of sin. When the devil hath brought the bait to your hand, and telleth you, now you may sin without molestation and discovery, you are then in a very dangerous case. Some that think they would not be guilty of the sin, will yet tempt themselves and delight to have it in their power, and to have the opportunity of sinning, and to come as near it as they dare; and these are gone before they well perceive their danger. So if you are inclined to pride and ambition, avoid the society of those that tempt you to it: come not among superiors and gallants, or such as kindle your ambition. A retired life, in company of mean and humble persons, is fittest for one that hath your disease. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate, (*Rom. xii. 16*). But if you cannot avoid the temptation, be sure yet to avoid the sin; take it as if you saw the devil himself, and heard him persuading you to sin, and damn your souls. Abhor the motion, and give not the devil a patient hearing when you know what he cometh about: resolution scapeth many a danger, which those are ruined by, who stand disputing and dallying with the tempter. Especially look about you when the devil employs great men, or learned men, or godly men, or nearest friends, to be his instruments. And if their subtilty puz-

zle you, go to the stronger and more experienced christians for advice and help. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation, (*Matt.* vi. 13; and *xxvi.* 41). It is a dreadful thing to think what persons' temptations have overthrown, (*Luke*, *xviii.* 13; *Heb.* vi. 6, 7). How wise and learned, and excellent men, have been outwitted by Satan, and sinned like fools, when they have let go their watch.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 957.

The victory of God's spirit over the flattering, enticing world in prosperity, is great and glorious, if not more so, than that over the frowning world in adversity. And therefore find the one, and you need not fear the other.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 862.

Be not confident of your own strength; keep away from the tavern and ale-house; come not within the doors, except in cases of true necessity: keep out of the company of tiplers and drunkards. Let not the (*Matt.* xvi. 13; *Matt.* *xxvi.* 41; *Luke*, *viii.* 13) tempting cup be in your sight; or if you be unwillingly cast upon temptation, let holy fear renew your resolution.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 185.

SECT. 11.—*Temptation in Believers.*

The devil will strive to lose and bewilder you in some mistakes, or to make you think that your conversion was not true, because you had no more brokenness of heart for sin; or because you know not just the time when you were converted; or he will make you think that all religion lieth in striving to weep, and break your heart more; or that you have no grace, because you have not such a lively

sense of things *invisible*, as you have of things that are *seen*; or he will tell you that now you must not *think* nor talk of the world, but all your thoughts and talk must be of God, and his word and holy things; and that all other is idle thoughts and talk; and that you must tie yourself to longer tasks of *meditation* and *prayer* than you have time and *strength* to carry on.—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 181.

Did not the *devil* plead *scripture* with Christ in his temptations? (*Matt.* iv). And doth he not, (2 *Cor.* ii. 14, 15) transform himself into an angel of light to deceive? When he cannot keep you in security and profaneness, he will put on a vizard of godliness: and whenever the devil would seem religious and righteous, he will be religious and righteous *overmuch*.

(*Saul*). *What getteth he by this? Would he make us more religious?*

(*Paul*). You little know what he hopeth to get by it. *Over-doing is undoing all*: He would destroy all your religion by it. If you run your horse till you tire him or break his wind, is not that the way to lose your journey? Nothing over-violent is durable. If a scholar study so hard as to crack his brains, he will never be a good scholar or a wise man, till he is cured. Our souls here are united to our bodies, and must go on that pace that the body can endure. If Satan can tempt you into a *longer and deeper musing* (especially on the *sadder* objects in religion) than your body and brain can bear, you will grow *melancholy* before you are aware, and then you little know how ill a guest you have entertained. For when once you are melancholy, you will be disabled then from secret prayer and from meditating at all: it will but confound you: you cannot bear it: and so by over-doing,

you will come to do nothing of that sort of duty. And you will then have none but either fanatick whimsies, and visions, and prophecyings, or else (more usually) sad despairing thoughts in your mind: all that you hear, and read, and see, you will think maketh against you: you will believe nothing that soundeth comfortably to you: you can think none but black and hideous thoughts. The devil will tell you a hundred times over, that you are an hypocrite and unsanctified, and all that you ever did was hypocrisy, and that none of your sins are yet forgiven; and that you shall as sure be in hell as if you were there already; that God is your enemy, that Christ is no saviour for you; that you have sinned against the Holy Ghost, or that the day of grace is past; that the spirit is departed, and that God hath forsaken you; that it is now too late, too late to repent and find mercy; and that you are undone for ever. These black thoughts will be like a beginning of hell to you.

And it is not yourself only that will be the sufferer by this, but many of the ignorant and wicked will, by seeing you, be hardened into a love of security and sensuality, and will fly from religion as a frightful thing which doth not *illuminate* men, but make them *mad*, or cast them into desperation. And so Satan will use you, as some Papists have drawn the picture of a Protestant like a devil, or an ass, to affright men from religion; or as we set up maukins to frighten birds from the corn; as if he had written on your back, for all to read, "*see what you must come to, if you will be religious.*"—*Works*, vol. iv. p. 182.

SECT. 12.—*Leaving Fortune by Will.*

He that will not labour, saith Paul, let him not eat, (2 *Thess.* iii.), much more in such greater cases. According to God's ancient law, (*Deut.* xxi.), they forfeit their lives, and the parents there were to cause them to be put to death, that were obstinately unreformed. And is the case so altered, think you now, as that you are bound to make such children rich, that parents then were bound to put to death? I am not bound to give unnecessary provisions to an enemy of God, to misemploy it, and strengthen him to do mischief, and be more able to oppress God's servants, or oppose his truth, or serve the devil.— *Works*, vol. iii. p. 442.

SECT. 13.—*The Christian Life.*

A confirmed christian, as contrary to a weak one,
1. Is not to be judged by his freedom from all scruples, doubts or fears. 2. Not by his eminence in men's esteem, or observation. 3. Nor by his strength of memory. 4. Or freedom of utterance in praying, preaching, or discourse. 5. Or by his seemly deportment or courtesy towards others. 6. Nor by his sedate, calm, and lovely temper, and freedom from some haste or heats which others' tempers are more prone to. 7. Nor by a man's pleasing or dissembling faculty to bridle his tongue, when it would open the corruption of the mind, and suppress all words which would make others know how bad the heart is. There are many endowments laudable and desirable, which will not shew so much as sincerity in grace; and much less a state of confirmation and stability.

But confirmation lieth in the great degree of all those graces which constitute the christian. And the great degree appeareth in the operations of them. As, 1. When holiness is as a new nature in us, and giveth us a promptitude to holy actions, and maketh us free and ready to them, and maketh them easy and familiar to us: whereas the weak go heavily, and can scarce drive on and force their minds. 2. When there is a constancy, or frequency in holy actions; which sheweth the strength and stability of holy inclinations. 3. When they are powerful to bear down opposition and temptations, and can get over the greatest impediments in the way, and make an advantage of all resistance, and despise the most splendid baits of sin. 4. When it is still getting ground, and drawing the soul upward and nearer to God, its rest and end. And when the heart groweth more heavenly and divine, and a stranger to earth and earthly things. 5. And when holy and heavenly things are more sweet and delectable to the soul, and are sought and used with more love and pleasure. All these do shew that the operations of grace are vigorous and strong, and consequently that the habits are so also.

And this confirmation should be found, first, in the understanding; secondly, in the will; thirdly, in the affections; and fourthly, in the life.

When the mind of man hath a larger comprehension of the truths of God, and the order and method, and usefulness of every truth; and a deeper apprehension of the certainty of them, and of the goodness of the matter expressed in them; when knowledge and faith come nearest unto sight or intention, and we have the fullest, the truest and firmest, and most certain apprehension of things revealed and unseen; when the nature

and the reason, and the ends and benefits of the christian religion, are almost clearly, orderly, decently, constantly, and powerfully printed on the mind, then is that mind in a confirmed state.

When the will is guided by such a confirmed understanding, and is not brutishly resolved, he knoweth not for what, or why! When light hath fixed it in such resolutions as are past all notable doubtings, deliberations, waverings, or unwilling backwardness: and a man is in seeking God and his salvation, and avoiding known sin, as a natural man is about the question, whether he should preserve his life, and make provision for it, and whether he should poison or famish, or torment himself? When the inclination of his will to God, and heaven and holiness, are likest to its natural inclinations to good as good, and to its own felicity! And its action is so free as to have least in determination, and to be likest to natural necessary acts, as those are of blessed spirits in heaven! When the least intimation from God prevaieth, and the will doth answer him with readiness and delight! And when it taketh pleasure to trample upon all opposition, and when all that can be offered to corrupt the heart, and draw it to sin, and loosen it from God, prevaieth but as so much filth and dung would do, (*Phil. iii. 7, 8, 9*): This is a confirmed state of will.

When the affections do proceed from such a will, and are ready to assist, excite, and serve it, and to carry us on in necessary duties! When the lower affections of fear and sorrow do cleanse, and restrain, and prepare the way, and the higher affections of love, and delight, adhere to God, and a desire and hope do make out after him, and set the soul on just endeavours; when fear and grief have less to do, and are delivering up the heart still

more and more to the profession of holy delight and love! And when those affections, which are rather profound than very sensible, immediately towards God himself, are sensible towards his word, his servants, his graces, his ways, and against all sin, then are the affections, and the man, in a confirmed state.

When ourselves, our time, and all that we have, are taken to be God's, and not our own: and are entirely, and unreservedly resigned unto him, and used for him; when we study our duty, and trust to him for our reward; when we live as those that have much more to do for heaven than for earth, and with God, than with man or any creature; when our consciences are absolutely subjected to the authority and laws of God, and bow not to competitors; when we are habitually disposed as his servants to be constantly employed in his works, and make it our calling and business in the world; as judging that we have nothing to do on earth, but with God, or for God; when we keep not up any secret desires and hopes of a worldly felicity, nor purvey for the pleasures of the flesh, under the cloak of faith and piety, but subdue the flesh as our most dangerous enemy, and can easily deny its appetites, and concupiscence; when we guard all our senses and keep our passions, thoughts, and tongues, in obedience to the holy law; when we do not inordinately set up ourselves in our esteem or desire, above, or against our neighbour and his welfare: but love him as ourselves, and seek his good, and resist his heart as heartily as our own, and love the godly with a love of complacence, and the ungodly with a love of benevolence, though they be our enemies; when we are faithful in all our relations, and have judgment to discern our duty, that we run not into extremes; and skill, and readi-

ness, and pleasure in performing it, and patience under all our sufferings;—this is the life of a confirmed christian, in various degrees as their strength is various.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 935.

I find abundance of ignorant people, that talk much of Christ, but know very little of him; that can scarce tell us whether he be God or man, or which person in the Trinity he is, or to what end he was incarnated, and died, nor what relation he stands in to us, or what use he is of, or what he now is, or what he is engaged to do for us. But if we ask them their hopes about salvation, they almost overlook their redemption by Christ, and tell us of nothing but God's mercies, and their own good meanings and endeavours. And I am afraid, too many professors of piety (do look) almost all, at the natural parts of religion, and the mending of their own hearts and lives (and I would this were better done), while they forget the supernatural part, and are little affected with the infinite love of God in Christ. I desire such to consider these things; 1. You overlook the sum of your religion, which is Christ crucified, besides whom Paul desired to know nothing. 2. You overlook the fountain of your own life, and the author of your supplies; and you strive in vain for sanctification, or justification, if you seek them not from a crucified Christ. 3. You leave undone the principal part of your work, and live like moral heathens, while you have the name of christians. Your daily work is to study God in the face of his son; and to labour with all saints to comprehend the height, and breadth, and length, and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge (*Eph. iii. 18, 19*). All your graces should be daily quickened, and set on work by the life of

faith, in the contemplation of the Redeemer and his blessed work. This is the weight that must set all the wheels agoing. You do God no service that he can accept, if you serve him not in this gospel work of loving, trusting, and admiring, and praising him in the Redeemer, and for his redemption. 4. And so you rob God of the principal part of his glory which you are to give him; which is for his most glorious work of our redemption. 5. Moreover, you rob yourselves of your principal comfort, which must all come in, by living upon Christ. 6. And you harden the antimonians and libertines, and tempt men to their extremes, that run from us as legalists, and as men that savour not the doctrine of free grace, and are not of a gospel spirit and conversation. I would our great neglect to Christ had not been a snare to those mistaken souls, and a stumbling block in their way.

O sirs, if a thought of your hearts, if a word of your mouths, have not some relation to Christ, suspect it, yea, reject it. Call it not a sermon, or a prayer, nor a duty, that hath nothing of Christ in it.

Though the pure god-head be your principal end, yet there is no way to this end, but by Christ, and, through love, which is exercised on that end, must animate all your graces and duties, as they are means to that end; yet faith hath love in it, or else it is not the christian faith; and Christ is the object of your faith and love; and your perfect everlasting love will be animated by Christ, for your love and praise will be to him that was slain, and redeemed us to God by his blood, out of every kindred, tongue, and nation, and made us kings and priests to God.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 581.

This is the thing that I would persuade you to :

Take yourself for God's steward: remember the time when it will be said to you, Give account of thy stewardship; thou shalt be no longer steward. Let it be your every days contrivance, how to lay out your gifts, time, strength, riches, or interest to your master's use. Think which way you may do most, first, to promote the gospel, and the public good of the church; and then, which way you may help towards saving of particular men's souls; and then, which way you may better the commonwealth, and how you may do good to men's bodies, beginning with your own, and those of your family, but extending your help as much further as you are able. Ask yourself every morning, which way may I this day most further my master's business, and the good of men? Ask yourself every night, what good have I done to day? And labour as much as may be, to be instruments of some great and standing good, and of some public and universal good, that you may look behind you at the year's end, and at your live's ends, and see the good that you have done. A piece of bread is soon eaten, and a penny or a shilling is soon spent: but if you could win a soul to God from sin, that would be a visible everlasting good. If you could be an instrument of setting a godly minister in a congregation that wants, the everlasting good of many souls, might in part be ascribed to you: if you could help to heal and unite a divided church, you might more rejoice to look back on the fruits of your labour, than any physician may rejoice to see his patient recover health. I have told rich men what opportunities they have to do good, if they had hearts: how easy were it with them to refresh men's bodies, and to do very much for the saving of souls! To relieve the poor, to set their children to trades, to ease the oppressed. How

easy to maintain two or three poor scholars at the universities, for the service of the church? But I hear but a few, that do more in it, than three or four of my friends in these parts. Let me further tell you, God doth not leave it to them as an indifferent thing (*Matt. 25*). They must feed Christ in the poor, or else starve in hell themselves: they must clothe naked Christ in the poor, or be laid naked in his fiery indignation for ever. How much more diligently then must they help men's souls, and the church of Christ, as the need is greater, and the work better? O the blinding power of riches! O the easiness of man's heart to be deluded! Do rich men never think to lie rotting in the dust? Do they never think that they must be accountable for all their riches, and for all their time and power, and interests? Do they not know that it will comfort them at death, and judgment, to hear in their reckoning, item, so much given to such and such poor? So much to promote the gospel? So much to maintain poor scholars, while they study to prepare themselves for the ministry, &c.? Than to hear so much in such a feast: to entertain such gallants: to please such noble friends: so much at dice, at cards, at horse-races, at cock-fights: so much in excess of apparel; and the rest to leave my posterity in the like pomp.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 893.

SECT. 14.—*Employment and Valuation of Time.*

I was taught highly to esteem of time: so that if any of it passed away in idleness or unprofitableness, it was so long a pain and burden to my mind! So that I must say to the praise of my most wise conductor, that time hath still seemed to me much more precious than gold, or any earthly gain, and

that they are deputed to bear his servants in their hands, that they dash not their foot against a stone, that they are ascending and descending, and are present with the churches in their holy worship, and that they rejoice at the conversion of one sinner; and that the least of Christ's servants, have their angels beholding the face of God; and that the law was given by their disposition or ordination, and they attend the departing of the souls of believers; and that they should contend against evil spirits for our good, and are encamped about us, and that they shall attend the Lord at his coming to judgment, and be his glorious retinue, and instruments in the work; and that they are numbered with us, as members of the same heavenly Jerusalem, and that we shall be like, or equal with them (*Luke*, ii. 14, 15; *Mark*, iv. 11; *Luke*, xxii. 43; *Acts*, x. 6, 7, 22; *Psal.* xxxiv. 7, and xci. 11; *Matt.* xiii. 39, 41, and xvi. 27, and xxiv. 31, and xxv. 31, and xxvi. 53; *Luke*, xvi. 22; *Matt.* xviii. 10; *2 Thess.* i. 7; *Luke*, xx. 36; *Mark*, xii. 25; *Acts*, vii. 65; *Gal.* iii. 19; *Heb.* xii. 22; *2 Pet.* ii. 11; *Luke*, xv. 10; *Joh.* i. 51). Yea, men must be either confessed or denied, owned or disowned, before the angels (*Luke*, xii. 8, 9). See *Rev.* xix. 18; *Rev.* iii. 5. But if all this seems not sufficient to persuade you, that the angels are so far interested in the affairs of God about the redeemed, as to behold and admire him in this blessed work, take notice of the express affirmations of the Scriptures (1 *Pet.* i. 12). Which things the Angels desire to look into; and why, but to admire and see the wisdom, and power, and goodness, and mercy, and justice of God, shining forth in the Redeemer? If this be not plain enough, mark well those words (*Eph.* iii. 10). To the intent that now unto the principalities, and powers in

heavenly places, might be known by the church, the manifold wisdom of God. You see here that the church of the redeemed, is that admirable looking-glass, which God hath set up to this very intent, that his Angels may in it, or by it, behold the manifold wisdom of God ; yea, and that upon the full revelation of Christ by the gospel, they saw that which did more fully inform and illuminate them. No doubt but the very work of the creation, yea of this inferior wor'd, that are made for the habitation, and use of man, are far better known to angels than to men ; for we know but little of what we daily see and use : and consequently it is by angels more than men, that God is beheld, admired and glorified in them. And if it be so in these works of creation, we may well say it is so in the works of redemption.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 572.

THE END.



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